

# Kent on Sunday

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Mid Edition No 602

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**Battle of ex-MoD site flares up again**  
Debate reignites over plans for 5,000 homes and jobs

## BIG DEBATE »

**For better or for worse?**

We examine the controversy over gay marriage

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## Why we need to be calm and collected on the big debates

SOME of the most contentious issues affecting our society come in such sensitive packaging, failure to subscribe to a certain point of view can swiftly see you labelled in the most derogatory of manners.

Take immigration, for example. Suggest the nation's position on it is flawed and although they may not say it to your face, plenty will be quietly pencilling in the phrase 'closet racist' next to your name in some dark corner of their mind.

Then look at gay marriage. Made legal last weekend, suggest you oppose it and 'homophobe' will be the phrase used instead.

The reality, of course, is that there is much centre ground upon which we should stage some rational debate. After all, those with conflicting views on both topics can be so fixed in their determination, debate can swiftly become heated and at that point positions simply become



Editor **Chris Britcher**

more entrenched - out of bloody mindedness if nothing else.

Inside today's edition, we set our sights on gay marriage and examine not only the arguments, but ask what it is like to be gay in Kent today. It makes for a fascinating read and one which, regardless of which side you're on, you should take a look at.

Elsewhere, we put the spotlight on Canterbury Cathedral. Everyone connected to the building - and that means each and every one of us in Kent - should be keeping our fingers crossed right now it secures the lottery funding it so desperately needs for essential repairs.

It not only captures so much of our nation's heritage, but its global appeal pulls in more than one million people each and every year. All of whom will invest in our local economy.

And that's certainly worth saying a little prayer for. Enjoy your weekend.

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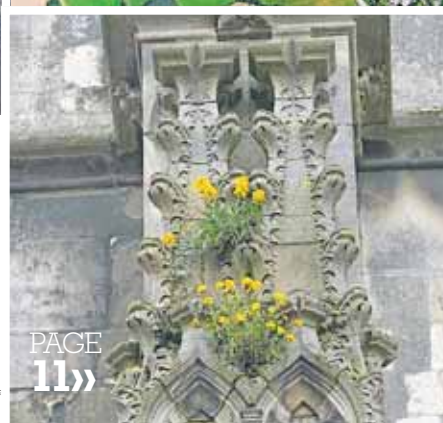
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### HOW TO CONTACT US...

**Publisher:** Simon Irwin

Email [simon.irwin@archant.co.uk](mailto:simon.irwin@archant.co.uk)

**Editor:** Chris Britcher

Email [chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

**Address:**

Apple Barn, Smeeth, TN25 6SS

**Editorial News:** 01303 817100

**Leisure:** 01303 817022

**Sport:** 01303 817177

Email [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk)

**Advertising:**

**Jobs/Notices:** 01303 817056:

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**Retail/Leisure/Motors:** 01303 817150

Email [sales@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:sales@kosmedia.co.uk)

**Distribution:** 01303 817072

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## Work begins on changes to Dartford Crossing tolls

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

WORK building up to the introduction of free-flowing tolls at one of the county's most notorious traffic hotspots begins this month.

The work will focus on preparing motorists for the change in the way of paying to use the Dartford Crossing.

As of October, the toll booths will be removed and motorists will need to pay to use the crossing – in both directions – either online, by phone or text, or at participating shops.

The idea is to prevent the traditional pinch-point by not forcing cars to have to slow to a stop.

Sophisticated number-plate recognition cameras will ensure no one avoids paying.

Ahead of the process, the first work begins this month with the installation of signs to help drivers understand the new system.

Although drivers may notice changes on the roads as a result of the advance work, most of the signs will remain covered until the new payment system comes into operation.

The process is being dubbed Dart Change, with the branding used to



**THE TIDE IS TURNING:** Dartford Crossing will be introducing free-flowing tolls as of October

highlight the upcoming changes.

Work begins on April 22, with signs going on up the A282, M25, A13 and M20, mostly overnight.

On the A1306, A2, Bob Dunn Way and Crossways Boulevard it will take place during off-peak daytime hours.

Further information will be publicised nearer the time.

Nigel Gray, Highways Agency project director, said: "The changes we are introducing at Dartford will reduce congestion and ease traffic

flow at this vital transport link.

"Work to date has been progressing well behind the scenes. Now we are ready to start on the road. This advance work has been carefully planned to minimise disruption to road-users and so will largely be carried out overnight when traffic flows are lowest.

"Due to the extent of road-layout changes required at the crossing, the main construction work to remove the existing plazas and barriers can only start once the

new payment arrangements are in place this autumn; this too will be planned with drivers very much in mind."

The Dart Change branding will also begin to appear at places where people can set up an account or pay, or where they can find out more information, as well as on the road signs.

From this month, drivers will receive advice with their road-tax reminders about the upcoming changes.

## Dramatic drop in the number of C-diff cases at two major hospitals

THERE has been a big drop in cases of C-diff at two major west Kent hospitals.

The illness – Clostridium difficile – can leave victims suffering diarrhoea, abdominal cramps and soaring temperatures.

It can prove fatal for the sick or elderly and is known to be a problem in hospital environments.

However, the latest figures for April 1, 2013, to March 31, 2014, reveal a big drop at the Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital at Pembury.

Both come under the control of the Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust.

Figures over the year have declined by 39 per cent and the trust says it is determined to slash the case numbers again this year.

The trust's two hospitals in Maidstone and Pembury had 36 cases of C. difficile between them over the 12-month period. There were no cases of cross-infection between patients.

This is 23 fewer cases than the trust's hospitals had in the previous 12 months (59 in 2012-13) and exceeds its improvement target (42) for the year.

The trust saw a 50 per cent reduction in cases in the last six months of the year compared with the first six months (24 cases v 12) as new measures took even greater effect.

Dr Sara Mumford, the trust's director of infection prevention and control, said: "Infection control is at the heart of everything we do for our patients.

"We will not rest. We are doing everything possible to stop avoidable infections."

Dr Mumford said the significant reduction was down to prudent antibiotic prescribing by hospital doctors and proactive treatment of patients who carry the C. difficile bacteria.

It is the prolonged use of powerful antibiotics that can upset 4-8 per cent of the population who naturally carry the bacteria in their gut.

## End of an era as demolition begins at power stations

DEMOLITION work began this week on two of the county's most distinctive landmarks.

The power stations at Grain and Kingsnorth have both been closed down and are now being pulled down, the power company E.ON confirmed this week.

Work started on Tuesday.

The oil-fired Grain site was closed in 2012 after it proved "economically unviable" and

coal-fired Kingsnorth last March after it reached its maximum life-span under power-generation regulations.

Neil Wright, at E.ON, said: "We have been working with our contractors to ensure that the initial demolition process is conducted safely, efficiently and with minimum disruption to the local community and wildlife in the surrounding areas."

## Bax named new chairman of the Kent Wildlife Trust

THE former High Sheriff of Kent, Mike Bax, has been confirmed as the next chairman of the Kent Wildlife Trust.

He will replace Fidelity Weston, who is stepping down from the role after eight years.

Mr Bax is a partner of land and property agency the BTF Partnership and runs his own 240-acre farm in The Weald.

He said: "Wildlife and habitat

protection and farming go hand in hand and many farmers and landowners play a key role in working with the trust, but I am keen to extend this with my connections in the agricultural sector."

Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading conservation charity for Kent and Medway, managing five visitor centres and 60 nature reserves covering 7,500 acres.



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## Smog hits us again as pollution levels soar

POLLUTION levels spiralled on Wednesday and Thursday as the county was hit once more by poor air-quality levels.

As we reported last week, smog hit the county last month, sending pollution levels soaring. And the same occurred again on Wednesday and Thursday.

It hit most of the county on Wednesday, while the north Kent coast bore the brunt the following day.

The cause was a combination of sand being picked up and carried from the Sahara desert in Africa, combined with pollution from across Europe and that generated within the UK.

With no rain or wind to dilute the air, it meant pollution levels rose to a sometimes unhealthy level.

It forced health officials to warn those with breathing difficulties to avoid strenuous exercise outdoors.

## Homeless duo jailed for killing of 35-year-old in historic Canterbury park

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

TWO homeless men who punched and kicked a man and left him bleeding in a popular Canterbury park before he died six days later are this week starting jail terms.

Lloyd Thorne, 22, and Peter Clement, 51, appeared for sentencing at Canterbury Crown Court on Thursday.

Thorne had previously pleaded guilty to manslaughter, while Clement was found guilty by a jury.

They received jail terms totalling 19-and-a-half years for their role in the death of a 35-year-old man in Dane John Gardens last summer.

The court had heard how the victim, David Wilkes, had been with friends in the city-centre park on July 23.

During the trial it was established that Mr Wilkes had been drinking in the park with a female friend, her son and Clement when two men, unknown to the victim, approached them.

One of the two men was Thorne.



**CLEMENT:** Jailed for ten years

Shortly before 7pm an argument began and Clement punched Mr Wilkes several times before Thorne continued the attack by kicking him as he lay on the ground.

Police were called to the scene,

where Mr Wilkes lay unconscious and bleeding.

Ambulance staff attended and treated Mr Wilkes at the scene. He was taken to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford before being transferred to Kings College Hospital in London.

He never regained consciousness and died on July 29.

Clement was arrested at the scene and Thorne was arrested two days later.

Clement was sentenced to 10 years and Thorne nine-and-a-half.

Detective Chief Inspector Dave Chewter said: "This was an unprovoked and violent assault with tragic circumstances.

"Both Thorne and Clement were responsible for Mr Wilkes's death and will be able to contemplate their actions where they belong – in prison."

Ch Insp Mark Arnold, District Commander for Canterbury, said: "Despite the violent nature of this crime, Canterbury is a safe place in which to live, work and visit.

"This was not a random attack on a stranger."



**HONOUR:** Paul Carter and the Queen

## Queen hands CBE to KCC chief Carter

KENT County Council leader Paul Carter has described collecting his CBE from the Queen at Buckingham Palace as a "very proud day".

The Conservative leader had been awarded the honour as part of the Queen's New Year's Honours List.

He received his gong in recognition of his services to local government.

Cllr Carter said: "I am delighted and truly honoured that my work in local government has been recognised in this way. It is also a great tribute to all that have worked with me, staff and council colleagues, over the years.

"It was a very proud day and a memorable occasion that I will never forget. A most wonderful experience to be shared and celebrated with my family."

Elected a Maidstone borough councillor in 1992, he became a Kent county councillor, representing Maidstone Rural North, in 1997.

He has been leader of the authority since October 2005 and in 2008 became the first chairman of the South East England Regional Assembly, which has since become South East England Councils.

Before he became KCC leader he was responsible for the education portfolio in the county.

## Disruption on rails for Easter weekend

TRAIN firm Southeastern has issued details of Easter engineering works, which includes no services from Kent going in or out of Waterloo East or Charing Cross over the holiday weekend.

The work is being undertaken by rail-infrastructure firm Network Rail, which is looking to get the work completed outside of the traditional peak commuter times.

Work will take place between Good Friday, April 18, and Easter Monday, April 21.

The main changes will see no mainline services to Charing Cross or Waterloo East over the four days, with services instead diverted to Cannon Street.

The line between Sole Street/Strood and Gillingham will also be shut, affecting Medway line services into Victoria and St Pancras.

The Victoria to Dartford service will not run and there will be fewer services between Victoria and Orpington via Herne Hill.

For details, see Southeastern's website.

## Farmer shoots dog after sheep attacks

POLICE are warning dog-owners of the possible consequences of letting their pets attack sheep after 40 animals were killed or injured following attacks in Marden and Staplehurst last month.

Farmers are within their right to kill dogs they believe to be causing distress to their flocks, and so police are urging owners to ensure their pets are kept under tight control around livestock.

As well as the suffering caused to livestock, dog attacks can lead to huge financial losses for farmers, with each ewe or lamb valued at about £180 each.

Rural partnership officer PC Daphne Allen said: "We have around six sheep-worrying incidents a month throughout Kent, where dogs are not only killing sheep but are also chasing pregnant ewes, which in turn causes the miscarriage of lambs.

"When a dog has a taste for killing and maiming sheep, it often returns. Sadly, we have already had one incident this year where a farmer has reluctantly shot a dog to prevent further attacks."

## Pool makes a splash after its reopening

TONBRIDGE Swimming Pool opened its doors to the public for the first time this year on Monday after flooding at Christmas caused chaos.

The complex was swamped with water, which came from nearby flooded rivers and up through the ground after storms hit the area on Christmas Eve.

It flooded the popular outside pool and caused extensive damage, prompting the complex to be closed to the public while a huge clean-up operation took place.

Total costs will be about £300,000, all picked up by the insurers.

Maria Heslop, the borough council's cabinet member for leisure, youth and arts, said: "I am so pleased that we have been able to reopen the pool in time for the Easter holidays.

"This has been a huge project because, as well as repairing vital pool plant and equipment, the pool has also been through an extensive cleaning process."



# agenda

What will make next week's headlines...

## More meetings on the future of Manston

UNION chiefs will meet the owners of Manston Airport again on Wednesday after calling on them to extend the consultation period ahead of its planned closure.

It comes after two business proposals were put forward by staff, with union chiefs describing them as offering a "viable future" for the airport. A separate offer, by an

unnamed consortium, was withdrawn earlier this week.

The Unite union, which represents about 40 of the 150 workers facing redundancy, says the business plans gave a "brighter" future for the airfield.

The site was bought by the founder of Stagecoach, Ann Gloag, at the end of last year in a deal



worth £1 plus associated debt.

She had hoped to bring passenger flights from Ryanair and freight from BA to make it a success, but both deals fell through and she decided instead to close it.

## Your chance for online Q&A with top police duo

KENT's two top policing figures will host their first-ever web chat next week – and you have the chance to put your question to them.

Chief Constable Alan Pughsley and Police and Crime Commissioner Ann Barnes will answer questions and respond to comments in an hour-long session on Wednesday, April 9.

It will be the first time both

figures have held an online meeting.

It means the public can log on to the Kent Police website from 6pm and ask about crime and antisocial behaviour in the county.

Chief Constable Alan Pughsley added: "I welcome the opportunity to talk directly with members of the public."

## ...also

### Home-care deals struck

A HOST of new contracts to providers of home care for more than 6,000 vulnerable and elderly people in the county will be awarded by Kent County Council this week.

The contracts are set to be signed on Tuesday, April 8, and come into effect from June to September.

### Lieutenancy book out

A BOOK examining one of the county's most historic and prestigious roles will be published this week.

Unconquered: The Story of Kent and its Lieutenancy will look at the role, which dates back almost 500 years. It is written by David McDine.

### Marathon train services

TRAIN company Southeastern has confirmed it is to put on a number of extra services to cope with demand for the London Marathon next Sunday.

It will run up to 50 extra services through Greenwich, Blackheath and Maze Hill, with additional trains operating from Kent.

### Monopoly winner named

THE successful Kent town or city to be immortalised by having its own version of classic board game Monopoly is set to be announced this week.

Tunbridge Wells, Rochester, Canterbury, Dover, Margate and Maidstone were all in the running.

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# Sainsbury's dents regeneration plans by shelving new stores

Supermarket chain cites money reasons for pulling out of expansion deal, leaving one struggling town centre facing a very uncertain future, writes **Sarah Linney**

**I**T was supposed to bring new shops, a leisure centre, restaurants, multiplex cinema and a revamped supermarket to Tonbridge's lacklustre town centre.

But the £85 million regeneration planned for the historic market town has hit the buffers, with Sainsbury's pulling the plug on the proposals on Tuesday, citing financial reasons.

What is more, it came hot on the heels of a similar decision about expansion plans in Canterbury.

On Monday, the supermarket giant confirmed it was pulling out of building a new superstore, leaving its existing site at Kingsmead free for a proposed multiplex cinema.

But while the cathedral city is one of the county's most vibrant areas already, Tonbridge had pinned much hope on its scheme breathing new life into a town centre in desperate need of offering both locals and visitors a reason to brave the traffic to stop and spend.

Sainsbury's was funding the entire scheme, which had been expected to create several hundred jobs.

The shock news – a public consultation only took place in October – incensed Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, with furious council leader Nicolas Heslop demanding an explanation from the supermarket chain's chief executive.

He said: "I am extremely disappointed and angered by this news, which has come as a surprise, particularly given the great progress that has been made over recent months."

"The borough council has worked extremely hard with Sainsbury's on these plans, which would deliver major regeneration in the town centre."

Under the plans, the existing supermarket, Beales department store and the Angel Centre would have been replaced by a new Sainsbury's, new shops, restaurants and a cinema.

The scheme would also have paid for a new leisure and community centre in nearby Bradford Street, with a multi-purpose sports hall, a gym and a dance studio.

In addition, there would be better access linking the town's classic high street to the new development on the site, creating a more attractive shopping environment.

Cllr Heslop said: "Most people would say the retail offer in the town does not match local expectations."

"It's frustrating because we have so many good things, such as the castle, the Racecourse Sportsground and the river, but the high street has recently lost a number of decent shops and we were aiming for an injection of investment and new stores."

"I have written to the chief executive of Sainsbury's and asked to meet him in Tonbridge to show first-hand what a chance they are missing here."

A glossy-looking website detailing the proposals, [www.sainsburys-tonbridge.co.uk](http://www.sainsburys-tonbridge.co.uk), has been taken down and replaced with a statement from the supermarket chain.

In it, portfolio development manager Ross Castle says: "We are very disappointed we cannot bring this scheme forward."

"We regularly review our schemes in terms of viability and in the context of changing shopping patterns, such as an increasing focus on smaller convenience stores and online shopping."

"Unfortunately, following our most recent review, it was considered financially unviable to proceed with the proposals. We remain committed to our Tonbridge store."

He insisted the chain had fully intended to go ahead with the plans but that circumstances had changed.

"We were always committed to delivering a new store at Tonbridge and had been working closely with the council on our plans, which were viable at the outset," Mr Castle says.

"We are conscious the decision will be very disappointing to a lot of people in Tonbridge and it is not one we have taken lightly."

"It is despite the best efforts of all involved, particularly the borough council, whom we would like to thank for their support and determination in bringing forward regeneration of the town centre."

"We would also like to thank the local community and, in particular, the many people who showed an interest in our proposals."

Almost identical reasons were given for the decision to pull out of the Canterbury plans.

The city council there said it was "very disappointed" with the decision but insisted the redevelopment of the Kingsmead area would continue, albeit in a revised manner.

**"I am extremely disappointed and angered by this news, which has come as a surprise, given the great progress made over recent months"**

**Nicolas Heslop**, the leader of Tonbridge and Malling council



**SHATTERED DREAM:** Sainsbury's was to fund the £85m plan that would have breathed new life into Tonbridge

## VISION TO CREATE SHOPPING HEAVEN

THE regeneration of Tonbridge town centre was described as a "key priority" by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council when plans were announced last year.

"We need to encourage investment in retail and other development near the High Street to improve the vitality of the town, for people living here and for local businesses," the council said on its website.

"Strengthening the trading position of the High Street by increasing the overall attraction of the town is a particular aim."

"The new leisure centre in Bradford Street and the cinema will increase the opportunities for people to enjoy modern facilities."

The new shops were expected to be occupied by "major brands not currently found in Tonbridge", the council added.

"It is important Tonbridge adapts if it is to be a vibrant retail centre."

"In recent years too many of the people in the town and

surrounding villages have been tempted elsewhere for their shopping."

"Part of the reason is that, while the town has many excellent independent retailers, it does not have the range of shops offered in competing centres such as Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone."

"Many of these retailers want to come to Tonbridge, but there are few large modern shop units available in the town centre."

"Attracting different and popular retailers to the new development will mean more people will shop, more frequently, in the town centre."

"That will ultimately be to the benefit of existing shops and businesses in the High Street."

The plans were displayed at two public exhibitions in Tonbridge Castle last October.

Work on the leisure centre had been expected to start this year and take about 18 months, with the rest of the development beginning after that.

new investor could be found to fund the building of the leisure centre."

He described the supermarket's decision as "misguided" and said it seemed to have been influenced by nationwide retail trends.

"This is not a Tonbridge problem, it is a wider retail economy problem," Cllr Heslop said.

"It seems to me that Sainsbury's has decided to take a short-term view of its property and ignored the longer-term investment potential or the wider economic activity that would be generated by the high-street retailers that were expressing an interest in the town."

"They have also failed to consider that the existing Tonbridge store is unattractive, tired, cramped and generally of poor quality."

"In my view the only answer was to start again with a fresh, bright store. That was what Sainsbury's thought, too. This decision throws that foresight away and with it go other ambitions for new facilities for Tonbridge."

However, he said he remained optimistic that new ways of redeveloping the town centre would be found.

"I remain committed to delivering regeneration and economic development in Tonbridge as a key priority," he said.

"We are already working with partners to improve the Memorial Gardens and the Town Lock area of the town."

"We will need to look carefully at what we can achieve. Some retail investment might still be possible."

"Tonbridge is a fantastic town with great potential. As a council, we will do everything that we can to ensure the town is vibrant and successful and we will keep the community engaged as we move forward."

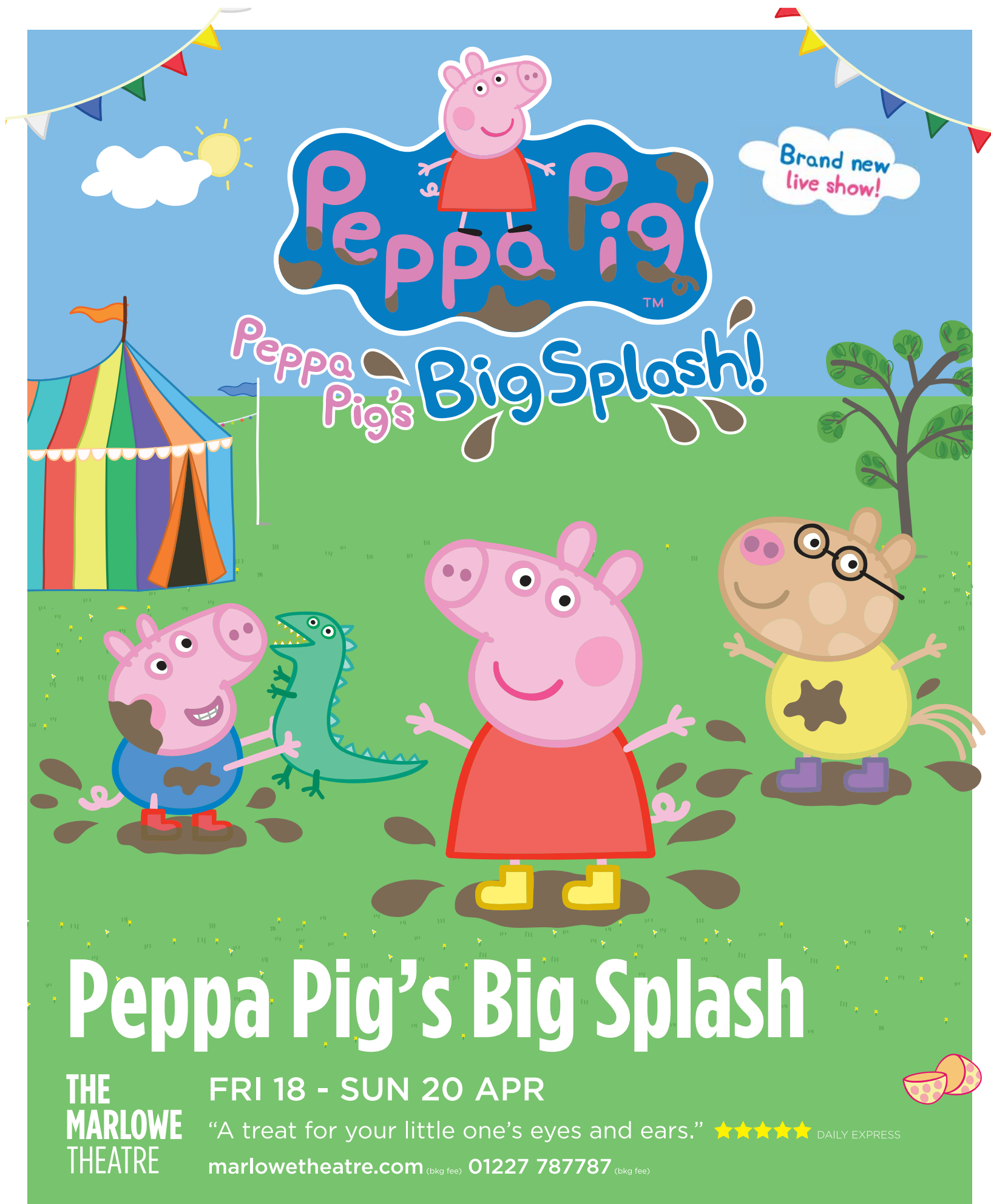
**H**owever, in Tonbridge the decision is almost certain to put the brakes on proposals. In theory, development could still go ahead without the supermarket, but in practice this would be nigh on impossible.

The Beales store and part of the car park are leased from Sainsbury's, and developing the land would be difficult

without the company's involvement.

"The council will be examining whether any other retail development could take place on the remaining land it controls, but that would inevitably be more modest in scale and will need to be viable and attractive to future occupiers," Cllr Heslop said.

"And without a similarly major scheme, it is highly unlikely that a



A vibrant, cartoon-style poster for the Peppa Pig live show. At the top, Peppa Pig stands on a blue splash-shaped logo that says 'Peppa Pig' in pink letters with brown mud splatters. To the right, a white cloud contains the text 'Brand new live show!'. Below the logo, the title 'Peppa Pig's Big Splash!' is written in a playful font, with 'Peppa Pig's' in pink and 'Big Splash!' in blue. The background is a bright blue sky with a sun, clouds, and colorful bunting. A rainbow-striped tent is on the left, and a green tree is on the right. In the foreground, three characters are in a green field with yellow flowers and brown mud puddles: Peppa Pig in a red dress and yellow boots, George Pig in a blue shirt and red boots holding a green dinosaur, and Mr. Rabbit in a yellow shirt and purple boots. At the bottom, the title 'Peppa Pig's Big Splash' is written in large white letters. Below it, the venue 'THE MARLOWE THEATRE' is listed on the left. The dates 'FRI 18 - SUN 20 APR' are in the center. A quote from the Daily Express, 'A treat for your little one's eyes and ears.' with five yellow stars, is on the right. At the bottom right, there are two small pink water balloons. The website 'marlowetheatre.com' and the phone number '01227 787787' are at the very bottom.

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**THE MOTHER CHURCH:** Canterbury Cathedral attracts more than one million tourists a year, but the stones of its walls as well as the lead on its roof are in need of very costly repairs

# ‘Soaked’ cathedral in need of cash for essential repairs now

As it nervously awaits the result of a £12m bid for lottery funding, custodians of Canterbury Cathedral warn **Sarah Linney** repairs are vital to protect one of the UK’s architectural treasures...

**I**T IS one of the world’s foremost architectural treasures, attracting more than one million visitors each and every year from around the globe.

It is the beating heart of the Church of England and forms part of a World Heritage Site.

But Canterbury Cathedral is in dire need of extensive repairs.

Its fundraisers need to find a staggering £20 million to halt the deterioration of the building and bring the 1,500-year-old landmark into the 21st century.

Or face the consequences.

“The cathedral is soaked,” estates manager and public relations officer Christopher Robinson says candidly.

“We have leaks. If you go into the roof void you can see the damp patches where the water is coming in.

“We are not at the stage of closing to visitors, but if we don’t take action bits will start dropping off and it would eventually get to such a state

that parts of the building would have to be fenced off.”

The enormity of the work should not be underestimated.

The magnificent Christ Church Gate – the intricate entrance from the Buttermarket, so beloved of tourists – is in need of repairs, as are the cathedral’s western towers and the precincts, the area in which the cathedral sits.

The entire lead roof of the cathedral needs to be replaced. It was last renewed in the 1860s and is therefore coming to the end of its 150-year life.

And repair work done by previous generations with the best of intentions is turning out to have unforeseen consequences in 2014.

Portland cement, used to repair the cathedral in Victorian times, is so hard that it traps water inside the stone, leading to breakages when the water freezes and expands. Iron bars, which expand when they rust, have a similar effect.

A bid by the cathedral for £10.5 million of Heritage Lottery funding was turned down last year, but, undaunted, this year it has submitted a renewed bid for £12 million. The outcome of that should be known soon.

Some of the extra money would be used to create a better welcome centre for visitors, with an exhibition on the cathedral, its importance and the treasures it holds.

Without receiving any government funding, it relies on generating sufficient revenues to keep the wolf from its door. The better the visitor experience, the more chance of generating the monies required.

“We have had feedback on the way we welcome visitors and give them the chance to interact with the building and find things out for themselves,” Mr Robinson explained.

But most of the money applied for is needed to cover a repair bill which, Mr Robinson points out, will only get bigger if the problem is not addressed.

“The longer this is left undone, the longer it takes to put it right,” he said. “When it comes to looking after buildings, a stitch in time really does save nine.

“Although buildings like this are quite resilient, after a while we would start losing some of the detail. And it will be a great shame if we are the last generation to be able to enjoy the cathedral and all its treasures. It’s our duty to preserve it so that future generations can enjoy what we have already.”

Some parts of the building can be restored, but others are too badly damaged and will have to be replaced.

“When we are conserving or replacing old stonework, the fine detail of the carving can only be done by hand using traditional materials,” Mr Robinson added.

“That takes time and craftsmanship.”



Chancellor George Osborne announced in last month's Budget he was setting aside £20 million for repairs to Britain's cathedrals. However, this will need to be shared by all 42 of the Church of England's sites.

And even leaving aside its mounting repair bill, Canterbury Cathedral needs about £10.5 million a year just to keep going.

A long-term appeal, the Canterbury Journey, has been generating £3 to £4 million a year since it started in 2006. Rent from property investments brings in about £1.8 million, with further revenue coming from the Cathedral Lodge hotel and conference centre, the cafe and the shop.

Another £2.75 million comes from the entry charge, which has been in place since 1995. Understandably, some people dislike the idea of having to pay to enter a religious building but Mr Robinson says the cathedral has no choice.

"Everyone here would much rather that it was free entry. But it's just a hard fact of life that to keep the place going we have to charge," he said.

"Before 1995 the average donation from visitors was just 15p."

Entry is, of course, free to anyone attending a service, as well as anyone who lives within four miles of the cathedral or works in the centre of Canterbury, and students.

So in practice, only tourists are charged – and if you Gift Aid your entry fee, you are entitled to free entry to the cathedral for the next 12 months.

"We are not trying to keep the locals out. Fewer than half the people who come through the gate pay

the charge," Mr Robinson added. "We're trying to engage with a wider audience. We hope to offer bursaries to schools to cover transport costs so more children could visit the cathedral, and to have community education officers who will go into schools."

"The cathedral is a fabulous building in cultural and religious terms and we want more people to enjoy it."

Around 800 volunteers help with the running of the cathedral and the 'friends of the cathedral', the oldest group of cathedral friends in the country, raise a "good deal" of money.

Grants are sometimes received from organisations such as the Freemasons, who contribute to the cathedral's apprenticeships, and companies like Viridor, which has funded repairs to the roof above the Martyrdom in the north-west transept. Donations and legacies are also an important source of funds.

Kent County Council helps fund some of the cathedral's apprenticeships and Canterbury City Council helps pay for floodlighting, but central Church of England funding only stretches to two canons' salaries.

Despite being England's officially established Church, the Church of England receives no direct government support.

This is in contrast with a number of other European countries – Germany, Italy, Denmark, Austria, Sweden, Finland, Iceland and Croatia among them – which support their official (and sometimes unofficial) churches through taxes for church members, state funding or both.

Mr Robinson says that the perception held by some that the Church of England is rich – a conclusion often reached by visitors to churches and cathedrals who see treasures on display – is quite wrong.

"The Church needs to up its game and present the facts," Mr Robinson said. "It hasn't got all this money. It has got some money, but it has

a lot of calls on those resources.

"It does own some treasures, but those are part of our national heritage. We can't just flog them off to the highest bidder. We are the custodians of those treasures now and for future generations."

He believes the preservation of church buildings is important for everyone, not just practising Christians, and that more government funding should be forthcoming to help with conservation.

The Church of England's cathedrals alone generate £350 million for Britain's economy each year.

"People come from abroad because of the heritage they enjoy in the UK, and a major slice of that is cathedrals and churches," Mr Robinson said.

"In Canterbury, we get an unusually high number of visitors from the Continent compared with other English cathedrals."

"And I think it was William Temple who said the Church is the only society that exists for people who aren't its members. It is there to be a resource to help people, and the cathedral should be there for everyone. It provides space and time for people to step back and find a quiet place to think about some of the bigger issues."

The Church is, of course, not without its critics: Its stance on gay marriage, in particular, has been denounced by equal rights activists.

But the average number of people attending services in cathedrals across England has increased since the turn of the millennium, from about 27,000 in 2001 to just under 35,000 in 2011.

"People can, if they want to, be anonymous in a cathedral. They can slip in, enjoy a service and slip away again," Mr Robinson explained.

"Over the years there have often been tensions between the Church and the wider community. There are a lot of differences of opinion within the Church and you are not going to please everyone."

For now, though, the cathedral is hoping it can please the Heritage Lottery fund, at least.

"If we get the funding we will be delighted, but we are not taking it for granted," Mr Robinson said.

"And if we're unsuccessful – then we will be trying our best to persuade other people that we are a project worth supporting."

■ For more information visit [www.canterbury-cathedral.org](http://www.canterbury-cathedral.org). To make a donation visit [www.justgiving.com/canterburycathedraltrust](http://www.justgiving.com/canterburycathedraltrust).



**ONGOING CHALLENGE:** Repair work inside Canterbury Cathedral is not only time consuming because of the skilled nature of the work but also very costly... the cathedral needs £10.5m a year just to keep going



**FACTS:** Christopher Robinson

**“ If we get the funding we’ll be delighted... And if we’re unsuccessful – then we will try our best to persuade people that we are a project worth supporting ”**

**Christopher Robinson,**  
Cathedral estates manager

## CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL FACTS

■ Described as 'England in stone' by politician Roy Hattersley, Canterbury Cathedral is the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury and is considered to be the mother church of the worldwide Anglican Communion. Nearly 2,000 services are held there each year.

■ The original cathedral was founded in 597 by St Augustine, who came to England as a missionary and became the first Archbishop. Since then it has been rebuilt and repaired many times over, creating a striking mixture of architectural styles. It was a

community of Benedictine monks from the tenth century until 1540, when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries.

■ In 1170, Archbishop Thomas Becket was murdered in the north west transept, known as the Martyrdom – the second of four Archbishops of Canterbury to be murdered. Becket was made a saint and the cathedral became a place of pilgrimage.

■ The cathedral also houses the tombs of many other historical figures, including Edward the

Black Prince; King Henry IV and his wife Joan of Navarre; Archbishops St Anselm, St Dunstan and St Alphege; Cardinal Pole, the last Roman Catholic Archbishop; and the elaborate and very colourful tomb of Archbishop Henry Chichele.

■ The cathedral's collection of 12th and 13th-century stained glass is considered England's finest, and it has its own stained glass studio for conservation and restoration work. There is also much stunning stonework and carpentry to admire, as well as

one of the UK's finest collections of medieval heraldry.

■ It has 21 bells in three towers, the oldest of which is Bell Harry, which was cast in 1635 and lends its name to the Gothic central tower.

■ The cathedral's library has a collection of about 50,000 books and pamphlets, including volumes on British history, science, travel and medicine as well as church history and theology. The library's holdings are included in the online catalogue of the library

of the University of Kent.

■ There has been a choral tradition at the cathedral for 1,400 years and its choir of 25 boy choristers and 12 professional singers perform every day of the year.

■ The cathedral involves itself in charitable projects and outreach work, particularly for the homeless. It has helped raise money for Catching Lives and Canon Pastor Rev Clare Edwards helps at the night shelter run by St Paul's Church in the city.





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# Is it houses or nightingales in new battle for ex-MoD land?

Developer and green groups clash over second bid for 5,000 homes near Strood, writes **Chris Murphy**

**L**AST time it was on the political agenda it was seen off by the humble nightingale – now, plans for a massive housing development in Medway are back on the table as Lodge Hill returns in a revised form.

And the battle lines are again being drawn as the application to build on former military land in Medway is considered in detail once more.

On one side are the developer and the council, who say they are keen to meet a housing shortage in the area.

On the other, there are campaigners who are upset that the planned development would destroy important wildlife habitat.

Last time the scheme failed because the area was given special status due to a thriving population of nightingales. The developer and the council, however, claim that a solution to the issue could lie in establishing habitat on the other side of the Thames estuary in Essex.

A public consultation comes to an end on April 15, and members of the Green Party locally say objections outnumber the backers by 30 to one, a figure the council says it is unable to confirm "until the consultation period ends".

But the local authority is driving the plans on, saying local business will benefit from the building work and the extra housing is essential for the job market.

However, its location continues to be the stumbling block.

Medway Council says Lodge Hill was not examined in isolation. Its officers had also considered sites at Capstone Valley, extending development on the peninsula and at areas to the east and north of Rainham. But it said none of these were seen as being as suitable as Lodge Hill.

A Medway Council spokesman told KoS: "We now have to fully assess the new documents and responses from the consultation.

"When we have done that work, it will be reported to committee and there will be a special committee hearing for this item, reflecting the scale of the application, on a date to be set."

The council said it had worked for almost two

decades with the government, all relevant environment agencies and developer Land Securities on plans to use the former military munitions site at Lodge Hill at Chattenden, on the outskirts of Strood towards Hoo, for housing.

It says the plan is essentially simple – build 5,000 homes while creating 5,000 jobs.

Lodge Hill is presently a brownfield site – previously developed land – that was used for a range of military purposes, including the large-scale manufacture of ordnance such as bombs and shells for the Royal Navy.

It was also used for training for the Royal Engineers, anti-terrorism training and training for bomb-disposal personnel, including IED clearance in Afghanistan.

The development of the site, which is owned by the Ministry of Defence, could provide a large proportion of Medway's claimed housing needs.

Developer Land Securities says it has spent millions on its planning application, appeasing those concerned about the wildlife that will be disrupted, particularly the nightingales.

It says environmental organisations like the RSPB and Natural England have been consulted on plans for the site from the outset.

This and more than 90 hours of public consultations and open-design workshops led to plans being drawn up, with half the site designated as open spaces, community gardens and woodland.

The plans have had some severe rethinking and have been back and forth to the council for backing.

A council spokesman said: "Despite all this close working, the RSPB waited until the summer of 2012 – an astonishing 17 years after consultations began – to oppose the scheme be-

**“ This is what the government decided to do to redevelop military sites... Yet unelected quangos are intent on throwing a spanner in the works ”**

**Rodney Chambers,**  
Medway Council leader (pictured)



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cause around 70 nightingales are there in the summer for around 12 weeks."

Reflecting the anger now felt at the council, the spokesman said: "Since then, red tape and grinding bureaucracy appear to have delayed the Lodge Hill development."

**T**he importance of the nightingale population, and the growth of a rare grass called MG5, saw Natural England declare the area a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Poul Christensen, Natural England's chairman, said: "The evidence clearly points to this site being one of the most important strongholds for nightingales in the country."

"Confirming this land as a Site of Special Scientific Interest gives the clearest possible recognition of this."

The Medway Green Party is unhappy with the development and has called on anyone worried about the birds to register their objections.

Party spokesman Trish Marchant said: "This proposed development is bad for wildlife and for local people."

"Medway Council has argued that local democracy has been overridden by the SSSI ruling, but the fact is there is already huge objection to these plans from neighbouring residents."

"Residents who have replied so far to the consultation are against it at a ratio of nearly 300 to five."

"Thus, if Medway Council allowed this development to go ahead, not only would it be turning a blind eye to the threat to other species, with a 60 per cent decline in wildlife species in the UK – largely due to building on wildlife habitats – but they'd be laughing in the face of local democracy."

The council claims that even the



**LODGE HILL:** Medway Council is backing plans for 5,000 homes, but wildlife groups want the area left as it is

government executive agency, the Planning Inspectorate, has declared making this area an SSSI is "potentially unsound" as the MG5 grass discovered is of very low quality.

The council said there had also been unsubstantiated claims that the nightingale population had declined, weakening that argument.

Relocating the birds from the site has also been explored, with Shoeburyness just across the river in Essex being cited as an option.

But the Green Party representative said: "The developer and Medway Council do not appear to have considered the practical difficulties of relocating the birds."

"The RSPB have stated that existing bird populations do not move on to other areas but return to their existing habitats which would be blighted by this development. If this planning permission goes through, it could set a damaging precedent for all other SSSIs in the country."

**T**he council says that there are other areas nearby already used by nightingales.

A spokesman said: "There are other suitable habitats for them, but the council were unable to put any forward as the RSPB refused to work with the council on these."

The RSPB vehemently denied this and hit back, telling KoS it was still talking with the authority.

It also points that out alternative sites are just not suitable and wants

**“ If Medway allowed this development it would be turning a blind eye to the decline in UK wildlife and laughing in the face of local democracy ”**

**Trish Marchant,**  
Medway Greens

to see the massive housing plan scrapped.

Medway Council leader Rodney Chambers is furious with the delays threatening the project, saying they "beggar belief".

Speaking at the time the plans were last rejected, he said: "It is unthinkable that more than £35 million, which has been invested by the government, Medway Council and the developer to ensure the viability of this project could now simply be written off."

"This won't just cost public money – it will cost local people 5,000 much-needed new homes and 5,000 jobs."

"There was extensive public consultation before the plans were put forward, including nearly 90 hours of public exhibitions and design workshops. As a result nearly half the 620-acre site has been devoted to public open space, community gardens and extensive areas of woodland."

"We have worked with numerous people over a 17-year period since

**PAGE 16 »**



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this site was first identified by the government as one for development to make sure it is suitable for sustainable development, bringing the housing needed to support our area's growth in a way that is sensitive to the natural habitat.

"This is what the government decided to do as part of its drive to redevelop former military sites.

"Yet – despite ministers from the past and current government supporting the development of Lodge Hill – unelected quangos seem intent on throwing a spanner in the works, which quite simply beggars belief."

Kent Wildlife Trust says the area is home to badger setts, six species of bat, lizards, grass snakes, adders, slow worms, newts, frogs, toads and rare insects including the shrill carder bee. It also hosts ancient woodland, which cannot be replaced.

Protect Kent, the local branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England, said: "We were initially cautiously supportive of the Lodge Hill site as it is a brownfield site and would have meant other greenfield sites were not at risk from development.

"However, as soon as it became clear that the site was of significant importance for nightingales we removed our support for development.

"Now it has been designated as an SSSI we will not support development. However, as a result we are increasingly concerned other greenfield sites will come under threat."

■ **What do you think? Join the debate.** Write to: The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SS, or email us at [editorial@kosmedia.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kosmedia.co.uk).

## WHAT THE RSPB SAYS ABOUT THE LODGE HILL PROPOSALS



“THE RSPB has been advising Medway Council since the proposals to build at Lodge Hill were first put forward.

The charity continues to work with the local authority on Lodge Hill and other planning applications in the area.

The Lodge Hill proposals are in contravention of the government guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework – which advises that Sites of Special Scientific Interest should be avoided for development unless there really is no alternative.

An independent government inspector,

having listened to all the evidence, was not convinced that Lodge Hill was the only site in the area suitable for that kind of development.

The RSPB believes it would set a dangerous precedent for other SSSIs, and the protection they provide, if the development at Lodge Hill is allowed to go ahead.

Based on its previous use as a military training school, the land at Lodge Hill has been classified as a brownfield site by Medway Council and the Ministry of Defence. However, last year an independent planning inspector confirmed that the vast majority of the land did

not fall into the category of 'previously developed land' – confirmed by aerial photos showing that Lodge Hill is a green site with few areas of remaining infrastructure.

The RSPB also has concerns about plans to relocate the nightingales.

An independent British Trust for Ornithology survey in 2012 found at least 85 breeding pairs at Lodge Hill and Chattenden Woods, more than one per cent of the UK's nightingale population. It is the only SSSI in England notified specifically for breeding nightingales.”

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# New law allowing same-sex marriages welcomed by some – rebuked by others

For the supporters of equal rights for the gay, lesbian and bisexual community, it is a victory, but for many others the words 'same-sex' and 'marriage' are incompatible, reports [Sarah Linney](#)

**M**ARRIAGE for most people is about making a lifelong commitment. But for two Kent couples who took their vows last Saturday, their weddings were about making history, too.

They were among the first gay couples to wed in the UK after the law allowing same-sex marriage came into force. At least 15 same-sex weddings have been booked to take place across the county over the coming year.

The change in the law has been celebrated across the country by equal-rights campaigners, and an opinion poll by BBC Radio last month found that 68 per cent of British people were in support.

Ruth Hunt, acting chief executive of gay-rights organisation Stonewall, said: "For the first time ever, lesbian, gay and bisexual people are equal under the law of this country."

"You can be who you are, love who you love and achieve anything you want regardless of your sexual orientation."

But that support is far from universal. And the statistics that demonstrate wide support also reveal one in three oppose it.

Unsurprisingly, then, it remains highly controversial; particularly where religion is involved.

Religious marriages continue to be

possible only between a man and a woman and the Church of England has forbidden its clergy even to bless a same-sex union.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev Justin Welby, said last year that he opposed "the rewriting of the nature of marriage".

However, the policy has been denounced as "stupid" by the Rev Kes Grant, chaplain of St Augustine's School in Maidstone, who said she would not turn away any same-sex couple who came to her for a blessing.

"It is a dog's breakfast," she told KoS this week.

"I could bless a tank. I could bless a warship. You can bless any inanimate object, but you can't bless a loving same-sex union."

"If a same-sex couple asked me to bless them, I would have to go with my conscience – I couldn't say no."

"But I would have to think about how to do it in a way that they were happy with but that the Church couldn't oppose."

"It's stupid. A blessing is a thanksgiving. Since when have there got to be rules about what you can give thanks for?"

The grandmother-of-four, who is based in London but lives in Maidstone, during the week, said many other clerics shared her view but could not speak out.

"I think there is enormous support," she said. "But even though many of my colleagues agree, they have to uphold the Church's teaching."

"I know for a fact that people are having relationships blessed, but it is happening outside the public gaze. There's this underground swell of opinion that has changed."

"I will continue to preach about this and challenge the situation and I think other people need to speak up, too. If no one ever spoke up, we would still be in the Dark Ages."

Ms Grant said she felt confident the

**“ I could bless a tank. I could bless a warship. You can bless any inanimate object, but you can't bless a loving same-sex union. It's stupid... ”**

**The Rev Kes Grant,**  
Chaplain of St Augustine's School

**PAGE 20 »**



Church would change its position in time.

"The Church is in a very difficult position. I don't think it realised society was going to move on at the pace that it has and it's backed itself into a corner," she said.

"I think we will move on. The Church always does in the end – it doesn't have a choice. It's just a shame it takes so long because people get hurt in the process.

"History decides who was the right side, and history will come out in favour of love. It always does."

**W**riter, presenter and comedian Sandi Toksvig, who lives in Herne Bay, renewed her civil partnership vows with her partner Debbie on Saturday.

Writing in The Guardian last weekend, she said: "Now every citizen is free to get married and we can all celebrate whom we choose to love.

"I find the religious arguments

**“ Gay people have been, and continue to be, persecuted in the name of religion, but the real crime is shunning those who are strange to you ”**

**Sandi Toksvig,**

Writing on the law changes



**POLARISED:** Entertainer Sandi Toksvig and Conservative Kent MPs Sir Roger Gale (top) and Gordon Henderson

against same-sex marriage hard to follow. Gay people have been, and continue to be, persecuted in the name of religion, but the real crime is shunning those who are strange to you.

"I believe the core of all religion is love, and that if you believe in a supreme being, then there is an absolute divine command at the heart of that belief to live a life of love."

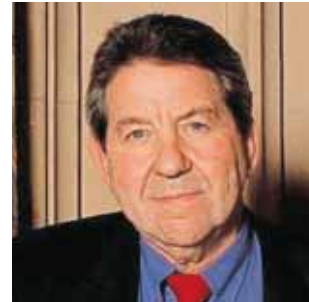
Thanet North MP Roger Gale, along with eight other Kent MPs,

defied his own party to vote against the Marriage (Same-Sex Couples) Bill when it went through Parliament last year.

A year on, he is as vehement an opponent of the proposals as ever.

"Marriage is between a man and a woman for the procreation of children. The words 'same-sex' and 'marriage' are incompatible," he said.

"You can't extend a definition to embrace whatever you choose it to mean at the time. It's like saying I



**“ Marriage is between a man and a woman for the procreation of children. The words 'same-sex' and 'marriage' are incompatible ”**

**Thanet North MP Roger Gale,**  
Voted against Marriage Bill

Partners of Windsor? Shakespeare would be spinning in his grave."

**C**ivil partnerships for same-sex couples have existed since 2004, but there are subtle differences between a civil partnership and a marriage.

For example, a civil partnership does not always offer the same pension rights as a marriage and may not be recognised abroad.

Sir Roger said he would have liked to scrap civil marriages and instead have civil partnerships as an option for both same-sex and mixed-sex couples.

"Civil partnerships were designed to stop people being disenfranchised, but what we have now doesn't address some of the serious issues," he said.

"If you have two siblings living together, they are not able to enter into any kind of partnership to protect their property rights.

"I know a lot of gay people and have



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Jason Said 'I am so proud of my amazing team who have proved beyond doubt, that we are one of the most creative salons in Kent by becoming L'Oreal Colour Trophy finalists for the 3rd year in a row and grand finalists last year. I wish my team every success in their categories and look forward to attending the Regional Final on the 14th April.'

Hundreds of photographic images from across the country were judged by the hairdressing industries most iconic names including Sally Brooks from Brooks & Brooks, Charles Worthington MBE, Ken Picton from Ken Picton Salons and Chris Williams, International Colour Director from Rush. The Jason Liddiard team fought off stiff competition and were successfully chosen to take part in the high energy Regional Finals being held throughout April 2014.

The next stage of the competition will put the team at Jason Liddiard through their paces. Competitors must create a live model look and demonstrate an awareness for Autumn/Winter 2014/15 trends in just 30 minutes as outlined in the brief, the model look must be original, modern and inspirational, the total package. The team of judges are looking for a trend-setting, show stopping total look that can inspire clients and hairdressers.

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# Mum of X Factor star Lucy Spraggan and her pride in high-profile daughter

By Caroline Read

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

WHILE the path of progress continues, Anstey Spraggan knows the fight for legal rights for gay couples is just part of the story.

The 49-year-old lecturer at Canterbury Christ Church University knows all too well that society can still display shocking intolerance.

She's the mother of singer-songwriter Lucy Spraggan (pictured), who shot to stardom on The X Factor in 2012 and who released an album in October last year.

Lucy, 22, who is originally from Canterbury, although you wouldn't know from her northern accent, has become one of the few young lesbian women in the public eye.

She has therefore become a spokesman for the LGBT community. It's something that makes Mrs Spraggan, who is also a writer, very proud.

A keen supporter of gay rights herself, mother-of-three Mrs Spraggan is even writing a PhD about the portrayal of female homosexuality in contemporary literature.

"When Lucy came out, aged 14," said Mrs Spraggan, "it was such a non-event that Lucy remembers it one way, I remember it another and my husband Colin remembers it differently – and all three versions were in completely different locations.



"It just wasn't a big enough deal for any of us to remember it very well. I hadn't ever really thought about it. I hadn't identified her as a gay child, but then I hadn't identified my other two as straight children."

Lucy was lucky to have an understanding family and peer group who accepted her as she was.

But still her teenage years were difficult

and one incident at university in the Midlands, where the family lived for 10 years, involved a teacher using a homophobic term about her – something that led the family to contact gay-rights charity Stonewall to force a formal apology from the institution.

"But it's nothing compared with the abuse Lucy gets on Twitter," said Mrs Spraggan. When she and gay singer and TV presenter

Rylan Clark were on The X Factor the pair received numerous homophobic messages.

"I equipped her with a useful bit of advice, which is to never take abuse from anyone with poor spelling or grammar – and that annihilates almost all of it. The social-media side of it is a really big deal these days and you have to have a really thick skin."

Since Lucy came into the public eye, she has gained a legion of fans and some 630,000 followers on Twitter.

Her mother added: "She gets letters from people all the time saying she's helped them to come out. Particularly when she was on the show – she was getting letters from people saying that watching her on a Saturday night with their parents in the room gave them a good way of sounding out their attitudes to homosexuality. And that Lucy made big inroads into their parents' attitudes because she was so normal."

Gay women, Mrs Spraggan says, are under-represented in the media.

"In this country," she said, "we do very much treasure our gay men but not so much lesbian women. I can think of Sue Perkins and Sandi Toksvig, but people don't seem to feel the same way about them as they do interesting, gay men like Stephen Fry."

"I'm not certain that we embrace lesbians in the media as easily as we do gay men. I'm not sure the media know what to do, particularly with young gay women."

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a significant number of gay friends, but I don't know a single gay couple that want to get married in that sense. I think this is a tiny minority, a tail wagging a very big dog."

**S**ittingbourne and Sheppey MP Gordon Henderson also opposed the Bill.

He deleted his Twitter account after becoming overwhelmed by tweets criticising his stance but said his opposition stemmed from a desire to allow people freedom to practise their religion.

Although the Bill allows religious organisations to refuse to conduct same-sex marriages, he said he feared the law would change, forcing people to act against their beliefs.

"People should be entitled to conduct their religion in the way they want," Mr Henderson said.

"This is one of the tenets of a liberal society, to allow people with different views from ours to practise them.

"I don't want to see people who have strongly-held religious views de-

**“ People should be entitled to conduct their religion how they want... it is a tenet of liberal society to allow those with different views to practise them ”**

**Gordon Henderson,**  
Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP

monised because of their beliefs. If that happens, all we are doing is discriminating against a different group.

"Giving a right to one group of people while removing a right from another doesn't seem fair. In a fair society we should hear all arguments."

He echoed Sir Roger's calls for civil marriage to be scrapped and said he would not, in that instance, see anything discriminatory about refusing to allow same-sex couples to marry.

"I am a social liberal and a believer in equality, and I believe same-sex couples should be given exactly the same rights as heterosexual couples. There should be no discrimination," Mr Henderson said.

"We should have changed the definition of civil partnerships to include both same-sex and mixed-sex couples and given them the exact same rights and tax rules.

"Marriage would only be for people who are religious and wanted to have their relationship blessed in a religious building. Then we would have delivered equality."

There was little point continuing to debate the rights and wrongs of the law change, Mr Henderson said.

"That argument is dead and buried. We are where we are," he said.

"And to all those people who are in a same-sex relationship who want to get married, I wish them well.

"I don't have to agree with it, but now that the law has changed I feel that they should be able to get married without bad grace and that we should give them our best wishes."

■ **What do you think? Join the debate. Share your views. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SS. Or email editorial@kosmedia.co.uk**

## LGBT SOCIAL SCENE IN KENT

THE Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community has made a number of attempts to conduct high-profile events in the county – with several Gay Pride events in Thanet in recent years and Margaye Pride last year.

But for everyone who cheers them

on, there are a quieter majority who ponder just why there is a need to make, quite literally, a song and dance about their sexuality in a county that is, on the whole, accepting of diverse sexuality.

Shaz Riley, 48, is the owner of The Butch Clothing Company in Paddock Wood. It specialises in wedding outfits for lesbian couples. She doesn't believe Kent needs separate events for the LGBT community.

She says: "Being gay is no longer a cause. It's no longer

something we have to hide from in underground hidden clubs, we don't live in shame any more and because of this, and the fact that the thousands who came before us fought the fight for equal rights for the gay community and won, we no longer have to march or demonstrate, or create secret clubs or even open clubs.

"We can just be members of society, we can mix equally with our straight friends. And if we do want to experience a gay event like a Pride we head to Brighton or London."



## Need advice?

■ THE national LGBT rights charity **Stonewall**, based in London, has been supporting equal rights since 1989 and runs an information service as well as creating material to help promote equality in the classroom and the workplace. Visit [www.stonewall.org.uk](http://www.stonewall.org.uk).

■ The **London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard** offers free and confidential support and information throughout the UK. Visit [www.llgs.org.uk](http://www.llgs.org.uk).

■ Bullying and harassment on the basis of sexuality, gender identity, race, disability or religion is classed as a hate crime by **Kent Police**. Report these crimes by calling 0800 1381624.

■ A new local service that launched in November is **AgeUK's Out & About project**, based in Tunbridge Wells. A new befriending service for older members of the LGBT community, it consists of several volunteers and is currently hoping to attract more clients. Get in touch with the project by emailing [info@ageuktw.org.uk](mailto:info@ageuktw.org.uk).

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# Big investment in rail service

Stations and track upgraded and London seats upped to 115,000 a day by 2019, **Chris Murphy** reports

**M**UCH of the news was already known, but Network Rail this week confirmed it was splashing out on a five-year, multi-million pound investment to Kent's rail network to ensure passengers get a better, faster service.

The company, which manages the rail infrastructure, says some £147m will be spent replacing signalling on lines around the Medway towns.

This will include the construction of the new Rochester station, allowing 12-car trains to call there for the first time.

Plus the station at Rainham gets a new platform.

Over the next five years, a £10m line-speed improvement scheme gets under way on the Ramsgate to Ashford route.

And there is to be a new station at Kidbrooke in south east London.

Further upgrades will be made to the railway power supply to cope with extra and more powerful trains, along with the continuing programme to improve stations, including Maidstone East and Strood.

The company said this is being driven by a huge growth in demand, which has seen a 50 per cent increase in passenger numbers over the past 10 years.

Overall, Network Rail said it is investing more than £2.3bn in the rail network connecting Kent and Sussex with London.

Network Rail said these works form part of a wider programme to deliver an extra 115,000 seats a day into the capital by 2019 – an increase of 20 per cent.

As work continues on the £6bn Thameslink programme, passengers will eventually see an untangling of routes to and through London Bridge station.

This will mean more trains and better reliability on one of the most congested lines in the country.

Once the revamp of London Bridge station is complete in 2018, some trains which currently terminate at Charing Cross, or Cannon Street, will be able to continue through central London, reducing the need for commuters to change from train to Tube at the busiest times of day.

Also from 2018, the completed Crossrail project will provide an interchange at Abbey Wood in south-east London, offering new and faster connections into central London, Heathrow and the Thames Valley for passengers from the Medway towns and Dartford.

Network Rail's managing director for the south east route, Dave Ward, said: "The growth we are managing



**MAJOR PLANS:** Network Rail is spending £2.3bn in Kent and Sussex

now is phenomenal – Southeastern and Southern already run more than 2,000 trains each every day – and this has given us a real opportunity to improve the railway in Kent, Sussex and south-east London.

"We have a great responsibility to passengers who rely on us and their operators to carry them home safely and reliably every day, and we can only continue to do that by improving existing routes and upgrading our technology.

"We are also working on plans to improve the resilience of the railway in Kent and Sussex to extreme weather – something passengers have become well aware of the need for this year.

Rail watchdog Passenger Focus praised the plans.

Head of policy, Mike Hewitson, said: "Passengers in Kent should benefit from Network Rail's massive investment in the rail network over the next five years.

"What we should ultimately see is an improved rail service bringing the things passengers tell us they want: improved punctuality, reliable trains with more seats."

■ What do you think? Join the debate. Write to: The Editor, KoS, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Ashford, TN25 6SS. Or email [editorial@kos-media.co.uk](mailto:editorial@kos-media.co.uk).

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Organiser Mike Fitzgerald said: "I have been involved in this charitable event since its inception and it just gets better and better."

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**DIRTY WORK:** Competitors take on the demanding, but evidently fun, course at Eridge Park

# It's the ultimate obstacle race... with added mud

Thousands of runners tackle cold, wet trench-filled course near Tunbridge Wells, writes **Chris Britcher**

**M**ORE than 2,500 hardy souls battled mud trenches, icy puddles and a huge slippery slide as part of an unusual, and messy, physical challenge last weekend.

The Major Series, as the event is known, is designed by British Military Fitness and allowed competitors to take part in a 5k or 10k race at Eridge Park, near Tunbridge Wells.

The fastest male to complete the 10km race was Adam Teszke, who finished with an impressive time of 56 minutes and 16 seconds.

The fastest female, Lucinda Bufton, completed the 10km in 1 hour and 53 seconds.

Runner, Michelle Wynne, said: "This was my first mud run ever and I loved every second."

Rob Love, managing director of outdoor fitness specialists and race organisers, British Military Fitness, said: "With nearly 3,000 runners taking part in this event, we are definitely seeing a growing movement towards challenges such as this, where participants are looking for a great entry-level obstacle race."

"What's great about the Major Series is it's not about the time you finish; it's about completing the course and having fun in the process."

The Major Series will be returning to Eridge Park on October 4.





# ...And now, ladies and gentlemen, here's Grace on her way

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

FORMER Bond girl and music icon Grace Jones has been confirmed as the headline act for this year's new-look Hop Farm Music Festival.

She goes top of the bill alongside Brian Wilson from The Beach Boys' and The Kinks' frontman Ray Davies.

Other big names set to perform in the grounds of the Paddock Wood tourist attraction will be James Blunt, Deacon Blue, Billy Ocean, Squeeze, Arrested Development, Marc Almond, 10cc, Paul Heaton and Sophie Ellis-Bextor.

The festival runs from July 4-6 and is the first under the stewardship of new promoters and follows the collapse of the previous event, of the same name, which was last year forced to cancel altogether.

Under promoter Vince Power, it had established itself as a name for music legends, attracting the likes of Prince, Bob Dylan, Morrissey, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop and Paul Weller. But the popular event nose-dived after failing to break-even.

Now it is back under the guidance of UK Events, promoters which organise a number of similar events around the country.

UK Events' Neil Butkeraitis said: "With a line-up of classic old favourites and great new bands, as well as lots of new attractions, we're set to take the Hop Farm to new heights in 2014."

Grace Jones will headline the Sunday night in her only UK festival appearance this year.

The star had a string of 80s hits including Pull Up To The Bumper and Slave to the Rhythm and also starred as a Bond girl in A View To A Kill.



ICONIC: Grace Jones to star at Hop Farm

## It's a Fun Lovin' Lounge

ORGANISERS of Canterbury festival Lounge on the Farm confirmed its impressive line-up too.

Reduced to just one day, and with a capacity of only 2,500, the event is bidding farewell to its traditional home at Merton Farm, on the outskirts of the city.

It is currently in talks over a new site for 2015, at which it will again be three-day event.

But before that, it will go out in style with a headline performance by the Fun Lovin' Criminals, supported by former New Order and Joy Division star Peter Hook.

The one-day show takes place this year on August 2.



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Controversial advertisement sparked red faces at the University of Kent students' union and anger from women's groups for encouraging attacks on solitary females, as **Sarah Linney** reports...

**S**TUDENTS' Union chiefs at the University of Kent were forced to scrap a controversial poster promoting its summer ball after complaints the image encouraged rape.

The poster showed a lone female student on a night out underneath the caption 'someone will lose their friends'.

It was intended to promote the Party in the Car Park event in June but was withdrawn after a volley of complaints.

The student in the poster, Kate Wilson, who said she had been featured without her knowledge, described the poster as "pretty disturbing".

Writing on her personal blog, she said: "Bearing in mind what can happen to girls who have 'lost their friends' on a night out, I find this slogan kind of sick when paired with a photo of a drunk girl."

Using her Twitter account, she said to the union: "Clearly, I'm fair game without those pesky protective friends."

Kent Union women's officer, Bethany Taylor, described the poster as "horrific and infuriating".

She said: "I am saddened as women's officer to see this and will ensure that someone is held accountable."

"What really is annoying is that it has been a struggle getting rape awareness campaign posters okayed, but this is fine?"

In a statement, red-faced union chiefs said: "We would like to sincerely apologise to the students, or anyone else, who have been offended by the poster."

"It was never our intention for the poster to be interpreted in this way."

"It has been removed and will not be used within any further marketing. In the future, we will check our designs with relevant people to ensure they cannot be interpreted in a different way."

The union, which said it had also apologised to Miss Wilson personally, added that the caption had been "a comment on the large scale of the event".

It added: "The union would never condone rape, sexism or misogyny or promote violence, abuse or lad culture."

"Vulnerable women would never be a selling point for a union event. Security and stewards always attend our ball, to keep students safe. This is not the message of the poster."

Kent Union director of marketing and business development, Hannah Wallington, said the poster had been



**UPROAR:** The controversial students' union poster was a one-off but it provoked a fierce backlash from those who felt it encouraged the rape of lone women

# Fury over 'rape' poster used to promote uni's popular summer ball

one of a number of different designs which used photographs and quotes from last year's event.

"Some of the other examples we have used include 'someone will climb on shoulders in front of you' and 'there will be rides'," she explained.

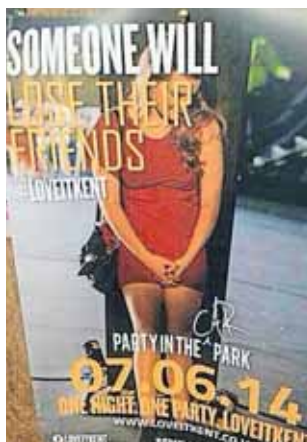
"Only one copy of the poster was printed and it was removed by 10am on Monday as soon as we realised our mistake."

"The poster was signed off by the project team, none of whom looked at it in this way. It was a mistake that none of us, unfortunately, picked up on."

In an article for the Medwire, the Medway campus' student news outlet, Miss Wilson wrote: "This poster makes hundreds of people uncomfortable. It makes us uncomfortable about an issue which threatens us."

**“ Just because this poster clearly didn't intend to remind predators that we're easier to get at when we're alone doesn't mean that it didn't ”**

**Kate Wilson,**  
The student featured on the poster



"It's pretty difficult to be 'oversensitive' about rape, when it is a very realistic outcome of any woman's night out. The threat of rape is something women have to deal with as a compulsory part of our existence."

"To ask a woman not to be wary of rape or things which perpetuate rape culture is like playing Russian roulette. A gun is being held to her head and you're asking her not to be scared. After all, you argue, 'you probably will not die'."

"Just because this poster clearly didn't intend to remind predators that we're easier to get at when we're

alone doesn't mean that it didn't."

The news of the poster made national headlines during the week and saw a torrent of criticism aimed at those behind the misjudged promotional campaign.

Some felt criticism of the poster was an overreaction. In a comment on the Kent Union Women's Campaign Facebook page, Alex Courtneage said: "With respect, people are reading far, far too much into this."

"The poster clearly does not have any sinister intentions. It's just saying people will lose their friends – something which often happens to people on a night out. It's not promoting losing friends."

"This is way too overblown."

**B**ut Miss Wilson said that if people perceived there to be a problem, then there was one.

She said: "If you saw a poster which specifically advertised your vulnerability to assault, and framed it as a reason for potential attackers to attend an event, would you feel safe going?"

"How is it overblown to want a poster to be removed which makes people uncomfortable? If you think reacting to an advert that implicitly reinforces rape culture is an overreaction, that is concerning."

"Just because you don't see the problem doesn't mean it isn't there, whether it was an intended meaning or not."

What matters is how we read it, and that we feel less safe because of it."

It is not the first time the university has come under fire for its campaign posters. Just two months ago, it was criticised for using a poster of Soviet leader Joseph Stalin, who masterminded the killing of hundreds of thousands of people, to promote its leadership elections.

The Kent Union women's campaign – which works to ensure women are represented across the board on all actions of the union and their views and opinions always sought – said it had put forward an emergency motion to the union council following the row.

"We have been working tirelessly on a rape and sexual assault awareness campaign this year, which has had to, rightly, go through rigorous checks," it said.

"Then this is released, and completely undermines the values of Kent Union and its zero tolerance policy. It's important that zero tolerance is not just a buzzword and that it is at the heart of the union's decisions."

"Survivors of rape are often told that if they hadn't lost their friends then they would have been safe, which is the kind of awful victim blaming that they have to live with."

"They may be offended for very serious reasons, which isn't to blow it out of proportion at all, and to say it isn't serious is to deny their experiences."





**PULLING 'EM IN:** Penshurst Place and Gardens reaped rewards of the countywide initiative

## Kent Big Weekend one to remember, say organisers

**By Caroline Read**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

BLESSED with warm weather, the Kent Big Weekend 2014 proved to be the biggest and best yet since the event launched seven years ago, according to organisers.

Last weekend's annual celebration of the county's tourism, leisure and hospitality sector saw a record 115,400 applications for the 20,000 free tickets available to 123 of Kent's visitor attractions and destinations.

The scheme is designed to give residents the chance to gain free access so they will then spread the word to friends and family – as well as swell the coffers of venues during their visit.

The event is organised by the county's tourism champion Visit Kent. Its chief executive, Sandra Matthews-Marsh, is confident the weather was to thank for the record turnout.

She said: "It takes some time to get all the figures in, but the feedback we have already received has been tremendous. Our first Kent Big Day Out in 2007 offered 10,000 free tickets, up to two per Kent household, to 90 top tourist attractions, on a first-come, first-served basis.

"In 2008 we had 15,000 tickets on offer and by 2010 there were more than 18,000 free tickets available; the demand was so huge following that launch the website kept crashing.

"Fortunately, we were able to move to a larger server and from there it all ran smoothly.

"From 2011 it spread across the weekend and a ballot system was introduced to make it fairer."

Kent Big Weekend 2014, marking the start of English Tourism Weekend in the county, was launched by Helen Grant, tourism minister and MP for Maidstone and The Weald, at Kent Life – the family farm attraction near Maidstone.

Sarah Hirsch, from the venue, said the annual initiative had become hugely important in giving attractions like theirs a flying start to the new tourist season.

She said: "It's really important for us to take part in the Big Weekend as we are keen to showcase what the people of Kent can find right here in their own county."

There are 4,400 tourism businesses supporting 64,400 jobs in Kent, which entertain 57 million visitors each year, annually contributing £3.4 billion to the county economy.

Penshurst Place and Gardens, near Tonbridge, is one of the attractions to have been involved with the scheme since the start.

General manager Ben Thomas said: "We believe it plays a vital part in the efforts to promote domestic tourism, as well as being a great way of raising our profile in the county."

Following on from the success of the event, Visit Kent is now planning an e-invitation campaign for Kent people to invite their friends and family via email or social media to visit the county this summer.

Everyone sending out an invitation will be in with a chance to win prizes for themselves and their guests to enjoy during their visit as well as special offers on accommodation and entry tickets to attractions.

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# Huguenots' huge impact on 'our collective heritage' to be revealed

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

**W**HILE many may think an influx of immigrants is a modern phenomenon, the reality is that Britain has long welcomed those from abroad as part of our rich multi-cultural heritage.

And this week the spotlight was cast on a group which arrived in great waves from our near neighbours on the Continent several hundred years ago.

Yet for many, the plight of the Huguenots has long since been lost to the history books – a name which barely resonates in our modern society.

Yet, as the 17th century turned into the 18th, they made up a remarkable slice of the population.

In London, for example, the total population in 1700 was 580,000. Of that number 40,000 were Huguenots – seven per cent of all Londoners.

Today, it is estimated up to one in six of us may have Huguenot blood.

And to recognise their contribution to Britain, on Tuesday the Heritage Lottery Fund made a donation of £1.2 million towards a special heritage centre – to be up and running in Rochester by the summer of next year.

So just who are the Huguenots – and what is their connection to Kent?

They were a group of some 250,000 French Protestants who fled from religious persecution in France over a period of some 200 years, but most significantly at the end of the 17th century.

As members of the Protestant Reformed Church of France, they had split away from the Catholic Church and became critical of certain aspects of it. The result was a bloody backlash which culminated in many thousands dying.

Seeking refuge, they headed to Protestant nations across Europe, among them England. It was they, coincidentally, which introduced the word



**RICH LEGACY:** The Huguenot Heritage Centre in Rochester (above) and just two (above and top) of the many artefacts which will be used to tell the story of the Huguenots, who fled from religious persecution in France

**“ This project will provide Rochester with a fascinating historical resource... about a migration that brought many advantages to British society ”**

**Stuart McLeod,**  
Heritage Lottery Fund

‘refugee’ into the English language.

Up to 80,000 settled here – almost all of them having travelled through Kent, or other key ports. Many set up home in the county.

There were recorded settlements in Canterbury and Sandwich, as well as nearby Rye and Greenwich.

This re-settlement represents, charity chiefs claim, the biggest proportionate influx of immigrants in England's history.

In 1718, an organisation called the French Hospital was founded. A charity designed to offer sanctuary to Huguenots in need.



It is these collections which will be used as the bedrock to help to tell the Huguenot story.

It has purchased a building on the High Street. The first floor will continue to be used as the Visitor Information Centre for Medway, while the first and second floors will become the heritage centre.

The remainder will be converted into flats for French Hospital residents.

**P**eter Duval, chairman of the Huguenot Heritage Centre, explained: “The directors of the French Hospital have been working towards the creation of a Huguenot Heritage Centre for many years. This award allows us now to bring the little known but fascinating, and hugely important, story of Huguenot immigration and integration to a wide audience.

“It is an enormously important part of our collective heritage.”

Stuart McLeod, head of Heritage Lottery Fund South East England, added: “This project will provide Rochester with a fascinating historical resource and visitor attraction enabling people to learn about a wave of migration that brought many advantages to British society.

“Giving people the chance to discover if they have Huguenot ancestry will, I'm certain, be especially popular.”

The centre will tell the story of the flight of Huguenots to Britain and their contributions to the formation of modern Britain.

Among them are key crafts including silk weaving and silversmithing.

If all goes to plan, the centre will open in summer 2015

Mark Reckless, MP for Rochester, said: “This grant will help bring to life the story of the Huguenots so the public may fully appreciate the contribution they made to our society and their continuing legacy.

“My congratulations to everyone involved in this successful bid.

“My thanks also to the Heritage Lottery Fund for its ongoing support in my constituency.”

## Persecution lasted hundreds of years

HUGUENOT was the name applied to French Protestants in the 16th century and was probably a corruption of the German eidgenossen ‘confederats’.

They were severely persecuted in France under Francis I and Henry II, and following the massacre on St Bartholomew's Day in 1572 – in which anything up to 30,000 were killed in purges across France – many Huguenots came as refugees to settle in England, mainly to London and to Canterbury where they founded their church – now in the Black Prince's Chantry – in the crypt of Canterbury Cathedral.

The Thirty Years' War which followed failed to crush them. Although in 1598 Henry IV had granted tolerance by the Edict of

Nantes, in 1685 Louis XIV revoked the Edict and the forcible conversion and persecutions started again with renewed vigour, with the result that about 250,000 people left France.

Many migrated to England, others to Ireland, elsewhere in Europe and America.

When the Huguenots started to flood into the UK they established key settlements. In the south east it was Canterbury, Rye, Sandwich and Greenwich. In the west, it was Bristol, Southampton and Plymouth. In East Anglia, Ipswich and Norwich.

In London, they settled in the City, Soho, Spitalfields, Wandsworth and Westminster.

They brought finance, industry, soldiering, intellectual life and the arts – contributing to the rise of British prosperity and power.

Source: THE FRENCH HOSPITAL WWW.FRENCHHOSPITAL.ORG.UK

## French Hospital's flats for the elderly

THE French Hospital's presence in Rochester started with the purchase of 19 terraced houses that made up Theobald Square.

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La Providence, its fourth home, was opened by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Lord Cornwallis, on June 21, 1960.

The accommodation was enlarged by the addition of 14 new flats in 1974.

In 1983, on land acquired between the square and the old Roman city wall, four more flats were built, together with a common room for the residents with gardens

on either side, including a ‘Huguenots’ garden’ – in which flowers and shrubs associated with the Huguenots are planted.

The development was completed in 1988 with the addition of three more flats.

Four flats in the square have also been reconstructed with special features designed for disabled residents.

Thus there are now approximately 60 residents' flats, predominantly with single bedrooms and fitted with an emergency call system when appropriate and overseen 24-hours-a-day by a duty steward.

There are also two guest flats. Residents' contributions towards rent, heating and hot water are subsidised by the charity.

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# Royal St George's women U-turn?

Kent's most famous golf course considers allowing female members after calls to end men-only clubs. By **Chris Murphy**

**T**HE county's most famous golf club, and regular host of The Open, says it is "considering its position" to break with tradition and allow women to become members.

Royal St George's at Sandwich has no problem allowing women to play its famous, challenging links course, but blocks them from being members.

However, now the 'home of golf', the Royal and Ancient Golf Club at St Andrews in Scotland, is quizzing its members over whether men-only clubs should be consigned to history.

That will come in the form of an open vote in September.

Although it is separate to The R&A – which administers the rules of the game – a change in the famous club's position may well signal a sea change at those venues which continue to maintain a men-only approach.

Colonel Tim Checketts, secretary at St George's, told us: "For a while now, the club has been considering its position as a single-sex private members golf club, and when deliberations are concluded, the committee will make a recommendation to the membership in the normal way.

"It would not be appropriate for me to say anything more at this stage."

The course has hosted 13 Open Championships since 1894, and is regarded as one of Britain's premier clubs. James Bond author Ian Fleming played there and called it Royal St Mark's in the 1959 novel *Goldfinger*.

The last Open took place in 2011, where hundreds of thousands of fans saw Irishman Darren Clarke win the famous Claret Jug.

Ladies can become full members of the Royal Cinque Ports Club along the coastline from St Georges in Deal, but need to be proposed and seconded by existing members of two years who know the applicant.

At Prince's Golf Club, also in Deal, ladies are admitted.

Spokesman Ally McGuirk said: "We opened in 1906, and have always welcomed women as members."

Both clubs have also been Open Championship venues.

A spokesman for the Royal and Ancient Golf Club said: "The club's committees are strongly in favour of the rule change and are asking members to support it."

Maidstone MP and sports minister Helen Grant has also backed the vote to accept women.

She said: "This is welcome news from the Royal and Ancient and I

urge its members to follow their committees' recommendations and vote 'yes' for women members.

"It would mark a step in the right direction for the sport and I would hope encourage the remaining golf clubs that still have anachronistic single-sex member policies to follow suit."

Shona Malcolm, from the Ladies Golf Union, told us as far her union is concerned, each club should be run as their members require.

She said: "We welcome the vote. We have always been consistent saying it is anachronistic that we have single-gender clubs, of either gender, in the 21st century.

"But change has got to happen from within and each individual club will do so in their own time."

In 2012 a landmark decision was made when the famous Augusta National Golf Club in Georgia, in America, home of the US Masters, admitted women as members for the first time – inviting US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice to create history by joining.

St Andrews has said only one per cent of British golf clubs are single sex, and of those they are roughly 50/50 all male or all female.



**HAPPY DAYS:** Darren Clarke celebrates winning 2011 Open at Sandwich

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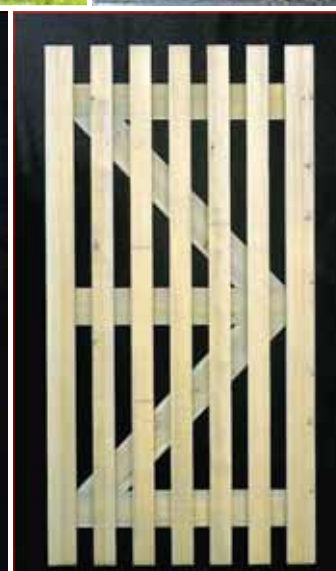
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# Campaign bites back to halt 'despicable' work of illegal loan sharks

By Chris Britcher

chris.britcher@archant.co.uk

**T**HE on-going fight against the menace of illegal loan sharks is continuing with the launch of a major campaign designed at highlighting the dangers of the lenders.

Loan sharks are illegal moneylenders who often charge very high interest rates and can use the threat of violence against those defaulting on payments.

Some have been known to lend at interest rates of a staggering 131,000 per cent APR.

Now the England Illegal Money Lending Team has teamed up with Medway Council Trading Standards to warn against resorting to such people. It also calls on anyone who has been a victim of the crime to report it to them.

The campaign ran throughout the week with events taking place in Rainham and Gillingham where the public could seek advice.

Representatives were also at Gillingham's League One match against Rotherham yesterday where they handed out leaflets.

Schools are also getting involved, with information packs being sent out in a bid to educate children of the dangers of such lenders, in a bid to prevent them falling victim to them in later life.

A spokesman for the campaign said: "An estimated 310,000 house-

holds across the country are in debt to a loan shark.

"These criminals usually appear friendly at first but quickly trap their borrowers into spiralling debt.

"As the debts can't legally be enforced many lenders will resort to the most extreme and callous methods to enforce repayment including threats, violence and intimidation.

"Paperwork is rarely offered so victims are often in the dark as to how much they are actually paying.

"Exorbitant extra amounts and interest are added at random – the highest seen by an illegal lender was equivalent to 131,000 per cent APR.

"In some cases the loan sharks have been known to take items as security including passports, driving licences or even bank or post office cards with the PIN in order to withdraw directly from borrowers' accounts."

Peter Hicks, Medway Council's portfolio holder for community safety, said: "Loan sharks prey on the most vulnerable people and families and leave a wake of misery in their trail.

"We want people to know turning

**“ We will not tolerate the activity of illegal money lending and will do whatever we can to drive out these loan sharks from our communities ”**

**Peter Hicks**, Medway councillor for community safety



**HELP:** England Illegal Money Lending Team is working with Medway Council

to a loan shark will never be a quick fix to their financial problems and, instead, will only add to their difficulties.

"We will not tolerate the activity of illegal money lending and will do whatever we can to drive out these loan sharks from our communities."

**T**ony Quigley, head of the England Illegal Money Lending Team, added: "Illegal money lending is a despicable crime which causes nothing but harm to our communities.

"These lenders may appear to be offering a community service but

borrowers are often forced to pay back far and above what they have borrowed and can afford. Many are subjected to threats, violence or other callous enforcement methods."

Anyone has been a victim of a loan shark can report them, in confidence, on 0300 555 2222.

Nationally, the Illegal Money Lending Teams have secured 310 prosecutions for illegal money lending and related activity, leading to 195 years worth of custodial sentences.

They have written off £42 million of illegal debt and helped more than 23,000 victims.

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**YOU'RE WELCOME!**  
The Merry Opera Company is working with some of the country's finest young musical talent



Director John Ramster talks to **Dave Mairs** about a contemporary portrayal of Handel's extraordinary work that could bring it to a whole new audience

**H**ANDEL'S Messiah... it's a choral work with which we are all familiar, at least by name, but the number of us who have experienced this astonishing piece of music is, in truth, low.

So for those who don't know, Messiah is a three-part oratorio.

And an oratorio, for those who don't know, is a composition for orchestra, choir and soloists.

Oratorios also focus largely on religious or sacred matters, which, of course, is where we turn to Messiah, a piece written in 1741 by Handel from a text by Charles Jennens.

The work is a reflection of Jesus Christ as Messiah, with the first part covering his coming and its prediction by the prophets, the second the Passion (concluding with the famous Hallelujah Chorus) and the third the Resurrection and the glorification of Christ in Heaven.

Messiah, you might have gathered, is not standard fare for the mainstream, whose musical tastes are dictated increasingly by television talent shows, a trend that disturbs many in most genres

## Group make merry with a very modern Messiah

of musical entertainment, not just the more highbrow.

The situation is compounded by a frequent criticism of Messiah that it can only be appreciated by anyone familiar with the Christian narrative.

Whether that is valid is

debatable, but a production being brought to three Kent venues this month should at least lay to rest the idea that Messiah is necessarily an elitist work to be enjoyed only by those versed in the ways of grand 18th-century musical works or indeed The Bible.

It has been put together by the Edenbridge-based Merry Opera Company and brings Messiah very much into the contemporary realm.

Rather than presenting static soloists and huge choirs reading music, this production features a cast of just 12 singers taking the roles of strangers meeting in a church and telling their own, often troubled, stories.

John Ramster, a professor at the Royal Academy of Music, is directing the work with Merry Opera for the second time – all told, this is its fifth revival by the company.

Ramster is writing a novel on Handel, so there can be few better qualified for the job in hand. As well as his love for Messiah, he clearly has a deep respect for the Merry Opera Company.

"I freelance around, but I've been working with the company for the last three years or so. They have a real commitment to employing young singers at the start of their careers – I'm used to working with young singers and there's the passion of Matthew Quirk [producer and driving force behind the company], who made all this

Continued on page 37 »

### » Features team

**Editor:** Dave Mairs  
dave.mairs@archant.co.uk  
Tel: 01303 817022

**Reporter:** Greg Miles  
greg.miles@archant.co.uk  
Tel: 01303 817048



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**WOULD** you like to bounce into spring with me and onwards? Widow late 60's, enjoy most things in life, looking for someone to enjoy them with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411395

**SARAH**, married lady seeks discreet no strings fun with gent. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1948 Box 408291

**LADY** 60, size 12, easy going, likes animals, seeks male for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411301

**SUSAN** seeking nice male, medium build, 35, easygoing, likes music, nights in. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 406779

**ANNA**, busy mature lady seeks no strings discreet meetings with male any age or location. Tel No: 0905 002 1954 Box 366019

**MARIE** 37yrs slim attractive caring, likes meals in/out, cinema, tennis, keeping fit/active, WLTm fun loving, reliable man for friendship leading to more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411037

**SOPHIE** 27yr old nursing assistant with no ties looking for discreet adult fun times with tall attractive guy 35-42yrs. GSOH essential. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410717

**NINA**, black beauty, looking for discreet adult times with man any age. Tel: 0905 002 1957 Box 409901

**34YR** single mum of 1 who loves nights out having a good time seeks similar sociable fun guy to enjoy relaxed but extremely fun relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410709

**BUSTY** Caribbean lady who loves music, dance and singing, looking for nice older guy for mutual adult no strings fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410305

**REBECCA** kind, caring, honest, lonely, seeking older gent to wine and dine me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 402273

**68YR** old widow, seeking 68-70yr old male, likes meals out, cosy nights in, lets start New Year with new outlook. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409467

**SAM**, 35yrs, own business, sexy, loves dressing up and married, seeks discreet man for casual meetings. Can travel anywhere. ACA. Tel No: 0905 002 1960 Box 408297

**LYN** 34yrs, pretty petite dark haired female, loves music, meals out, quiet drinks out, seeking caring male with GSOH who can make me feel special again. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410137

**CAROLINE** blonde curvy very active lady who loves to socialise, countryside, seeking similar caring male for LTR and to share good times with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409413

**RACHEL** 39, brown hair/eyes, 5ft 6ins, bubbly, outgoing, naughty, busy, divorced, seeks male for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410835

**SUE** optimistic divorced lady with OHAC, good job, enjoys meals out, cinema, countryside, pub lunches, looking for likeminded outgoing happy male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410467

**WOULD** you like to be my Valentine? Widow 68, seeking Valentine 68-70, likes most things, would like to share them with someone. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410695

**BLONDE** pretty, long legged, voluptuous, blue eyes, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410585

**LAURA** happy size 12-14, attractive, loves shopping, gym, music, clubbing, eating in/out, looking for sincere honest male looking for more than just good fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410713

**KATIE** 21yr old very attractive female who is up for most things, looking for daytime fun, no strings and discreet pls. Age/status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410573

**JEWISH** widow, 67, loves animals, seeks genuine, Jewish gent, 68-73 for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410547

**DAWN** 38 dark haired/eyes medium built busty female who loves nights in/out, WLTm fun honest male/single dad with GSOH to help mend my broken heart. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410483

**TERRI** 44 green eyed long legged busty blonde, loves to dress up and look feminine, seeking loving, fun, honest professional to fall head over her heels with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410315

**SUE** attractive, likes walks, gardening, social drinks, looking for male to settle down with, 60's. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410231

**VANESSA** 32yrs single mum, honest, loving, kind hearted, been hurt in the past enjoys music, reading etc. WLTm my very special Mr Right. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409899

**MARIE** slim attractive fun brunette, looking for good times with exciting broadminded male. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409707

**SUSAN** 29 green eyes, dark hair, slim, looking for Mr tall dark and handsome to take me out, enjoy adult times without complications just fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410957

**KAREN** blonde blue eyed slim 35yr old interesting female looking for good times, call me if are in a similar situation, board and looking for some fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410719

**JANE** pretty size 12, loves going out socialising, countryside, meals out, looking for no strings fun, nothing heavy, give me a call if you are seeking similar. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410579

**SUE** 32 blonde blue eyed curvy nurse, caring, loving romantic, faithful, likes cosy nights in with a nice wine and lovely man, if that's you, call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410571

**JANE** tall leggy blonde size 12, nice/eyes, likes yoga, swimming, meals in/out, etc, WLTm nice tall male/dad with similar interests to spend time with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410487

**WOULD** you like to be my Valentine? Widow 68, seeking Valentine 68-70, likes most things, would like to share them with someone. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410695

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**MARIE** slim attractive fun brunette, looking for good times with exciting broadminded male. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409707

**CLAIRE** young 39 slim size 10, pretty, outgoing, seeks similar spontaneous male for nights in/out and fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409417

**SUE** young at heart female, very adventurous and looking for no strings fun with mature man. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409251

**JAN** 38yr old attractive lonely female looking for uncomplicated fun times only. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409107

**ANGIE** 32 curvy size 16, very attractive, good company and really fun to be with. What are you waiting for? Call me. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409255

**SARAH** pretty petite green eyed female, lots of fun, likes children, animals, gym, eating out, running, sports, fast cars, shopping, seeking nice guy to spend time with. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408879

**BLONDE** female, 5ft 11ins, size 12, likes meals out, drinks, nights in, walks, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409025

**JOANNA** slim attractive blue eyed blonde nurse, divorced with two teenagers, lots of love to give, looking for Mr Right, call me lets put the spark back. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409097

**FLOR** beautiful educated European blonde, articulate, seeking similar intelligent well-mannered mature gent to enjoy socialising, conversing and quality times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408293

**KAREN** 55, fun loving, attractive, young at heart, seeks caring, affectionate man, 55-65 who loves animals and the simple things in life. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408813

**MANDY** blonde, blue eyes, voluptuous, honest, likes animals, walks, socialising, seeking older gent, late 70's/early 80's. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408741

**SELSEA** 43, driver, own home, N/S, 5ft 8ins, slim, dark hair, green eyes, confident, outgoing, likes most things, seeks N/S male, 40-48. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408405

**ATTRACTIVE** white gent, 48, 56th, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025

**DIVORCED** male, seeks Oriental lady, likes animals, music, will take care of you forever. Thanet area, willing to travel. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409963

**PROFESSIONAL** male, early 40's, fun loving, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409961

**CANBURY** mature male, medium build, GSOH, varied interests, sign language interpreter, seeks slim-medium build female, 24-42 for LTR. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 405697

**PROFESSIONAL** male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745

**DAVE** 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541

**ADAM** 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and nice. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421

**DAVE** 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415

**RETIRED** male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Midway area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343

**RETIRED** male, 56, 6ft 2ins, easy going, GSOH, loyal, loves pets, meals out, life, seeks lady for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407317

**MALE** 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855

**ANTHONY** 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355

**71YR** old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277

**MALE** seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189

**STEVE** 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835

**41YR** old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411

**WORLD** war veteran seeking happy lady with nice conversation in the Kent area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 411133

**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377

**PHIL** 6ft, clean shaven, blue eyes, smart, likes sports, walks, films, theatre, music, animals, GSOH, seeks female, 40-55 for fun and friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410351

**RETIRED** male, fit, active, seeks no strings discreet meet with female, any age and size. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410343

**ADVENTUROUS** male, mid 50's, seeks similar lady for fun and mutually enjoyable discreet relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410339

**CHRIS** widower likes DIY, gardening, nights out, rock and roll, N/S, looking for LTR with female. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410191

**ATTRACTIVE** white gent, 48, 56th, romantic, easy going, GSOH, seeking young lady 60-75 for quality discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410025

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**PROFESSIONAL** male, early 40's, fun loving, independent, OHAC, seeks warm, sincere, fun loving female for LTR. Animals/children welcome. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409745

**DAVE** 50, likes holidays, meals out, socialising, easy going, seeks female 40 plus. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408541

**ADAM** 48, single dad, bored, seeking fun and nice. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408421

**DAVE** 50, seeks female of similar age for meals out, holidays etc. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408415

**RETIRED** male, seeks no strings discreet meets with slim-medium build female, any age for adult fun. Midway area. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 408343

**RETIRED** male, 56, 6ft 2ins, easy going, GSOH, loyal, loves pets, meals out, life, seeks lady for LTR. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407317

**MALE** 67, professional, fit, 5ft 10ins, medium build, reliable, tactile, likes most things, seeks slim lady, let's go! Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407855

**ANTHONY** 48, athletic, enjoys country walks, seeks youthful female for friendship/relationship. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407355

**71YR** old romantic, 6ft, likes life, socialising, reading, strong tea, dogs, smoker but house trained seeks mature lady needing TLC. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407277

**MALE** seeking attractive female for discreet fun times. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 409189

**STEVE** 6ft 4ins, OHAC, seeking relationship, outdoor type, homely, wanting mutual good relationship with sexy woman. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 407835

**41YR** old male, dark hair, 5ft 11ins, easy going, likes music, guitar, seeking female for friendship, maybe more. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410411

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**BROWN** eyed white mature, handsome male, seeking black female, 18-50 for discreet no strings adult fun. Tel No: 0906 515 7112 Box No: 410377



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« Continued from page 37

happen through sheer force of will. Every industry needs someone like him, not just stage.

"Messiah is usually presented in a very grand format, but on this occasion it is done very differently.

"It does not tell in the traditional way the story of the Nativity – it does that basic thing of birth, death and resurrection, but here there are 12 strangers in the church. They are modern archetypes we can recognise.

"They have problems and issues and during the course of the piece the 12 strangers become 12 friends

**“ To have 12 trained operatic voices singing the Hallelujah Chorus is something that you won't forget ”**

and end up going out for a drink."

The piece is being presented at Faversham, Staplehurst and Tenterden in a tour that takes in seven venues across southern England this month.

"Every night is first night for this show because of the different places we take it – rehearsals are always very interesting. We've presented it in small churches and semi-cathedrals and in some places the cast can surround the audience, which is quite something."

Ramster talks of semi-cathedrals, so perhaps the ultimate place for the production would be the real thing, Canterbury Cathedral?

"Wouldn't that be amazing!" he said. "We have played places approaching cathedral size and the acoustics really work, but then much smaller venues have their own benefits – it works in both types of setting."

There is an impressive vocal range among the cast, with three basses, three sopranos, three tenors, two mezzos and an alto tenor in the 12-strong line-up, but, even so, can they really match the sound of a big choir belting out a grand oratorio?

"We are using the cream of the graduates from the London schools. It's a huge thing to hear – they are trained to produce a big sound.

"It's an amazing piece and to have 12 trained operatic voices singing the Hallelujah Chorus is something that you won't forget."

■ Handel's Messiah is at St Mary of Charity Church, Faversham, on Saturday, April 12, at 6.30pm. Tickets are priced at £14 on the door or £12 in advance from the box office on 0845 2626263.

■ On Sunday, April 13, at 6.30pm, it is at All Saints Church, Staplehurst TN12 0BH. Tickets are 7.50 in advance or £20 at the door. The box offices are at The Mocking Bird Vintage Tearooms or Chasing Rainbows, both in High Street, Staplehurst.

Alternatively, book at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/90233](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/90233).

■ On Sunday, April 27, at 3pm, it is at St Mildred's Church, Tenterden. Tickets are £15 and available at Travelux, 8/9 East Cross, Tenterden (phone 01580 765000). Alternatively, visit [www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/90234](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/date/90234).



**HOLD ON TIGHT:** Director John Ramsden, top right, has brought Messiah into a contemporary environment

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# We've always been about accentuating the positive

Madness frontman Suggs is bringing his one-man show to the Assembly Hall Theatre in Tunbridge Wells. His story has many lows as well as highs, but he looks on the bright side.

**“** WAS lying in the bath on my 50th birthday nursing an epic hangover from the night before when there was an almighty crash,” says Suggs.

“I jumped out of the water and there, lying amid shards of broken glass shelf, was our four-year-old cat, a British blue called Mamba.

“I knew he was dead from the strange angle of his body. I couldn't believe it... I loved that cat.

“My kids had recently left home and now the cat was dead. I was really upset. It triggered a deluge of emotion, an event that somehow tipped me over the edge. I began to consider my own mortality and, out of that, the idea for exploring my own past somehow crystallised.”

And the result is Suggs's new stage show *My Life Story*.

As the frontman of pop-ska group Madness, Graham 'Suggs' McPherson has, for many fans, achieved the status of minor national treasure. He has worked as a TV presenter, actor

and radio DJ – but he will always be best known for his procession of catchy, bittersweet hits such as *House of Fun*, *Baggy Trousers* and *My Girl*.

“The show's a memoir,” he said.

“It's not stand-up. It's not An Evening With... I toyed with calling it *Mad-Life Crisis*. In the end, though, having gone all round the houses,

**“ I was looking through a book of jazz musicians when I noticed the name Suggs, which resonated with me ”**

I've called it *My Life Story* – the good bits and the darker moments.”

There have been plenty of both.

Born in Hastings, he was the only child of a jazz singer called Edith and father William, whose life was increasingly overtaken by drugs.

“Dad left home when I was about three. I have no recollection of him.

“My mum later told me she'd come home and found him with needles sticking out of his hands. Heroin was his drug of choice and it's a one-way street that takes you further and further away from real life.

“In the end, it did for the marriage.”

Mother and son moved to Liverpool, where Edith sang in the clubs, before moving back to London.

Suggs's life was unstructured, to say the least. Soho was his mother's stomping ground where she both sang and worked in bars.

Eventually, Edith decided he would do better living out of London in Pembrokeshire with her sister, Diana, and her three children, but three years later he was back in London, living with Edith and about to go to secondary school. It's where he acquired his nickname.

“The other kids used to call me Gray or Mac and I wanted something more distinctive. I was looking through a book of jazz musicians when I noticed the name Suggs, which somehow resonated with me.”



**A TREASURE:** Suggs

Married for three decades to a professional singer who works under the name Bette Bright, there are two daughters – Scarlett, 29, and Viva, 25 – who now sing as a duo under their own names

“Madness have always been about accentuating the positive,” said Suggs.

“It's no accident our songs are still enjoyed 30 years down the line.

“They're upbeat, timeless, a clear-eyed celebration of life as it's lived. And we're still making music.”

The only problem for Suggs now, it seems, is shoehorning a remarkable first half-century into the show.

■ **Suggs: My Life Story** is at the Assembly Hall Theatre, Tunbridge Wells, on Wednesday, April 16, at 7.30pm. Tickets are priced at £26 plus £1.25 booking fee. Visit [www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk](http://www.assemblyhalltheatre.co.uk) or phone 01892 530613.

## Winter Gardens has the X factor for Sam ahead of UK tour

X FACTOR-winner Sam Bailey will be performing an 'up-close-and-personal' gig at The Winter Gardens in Margate ahead of her first tour.

It is one of two the Bexley-born singer will be playing – the other is at Watford Colosseum – before performing at some of the UK's largest venues.

Bailey won the 10th series of the ITV talent show in December last year and promptly took the Christmas No 1 spot in the UK singles chart with her debut release, a cover of Demi Lovato's *Skyscraper*.

She is now at the top of the UK album charts with *The Power of Love*.

In February she supported worldwide star Beyoncé on a date of *The Mrs Carter Show World Tour*.

This is a great coup for The Winter Gardens and tickets for the concert, on Monday, January 26, 2015, went on sale at the end of this week.

Visit [www.gigantic.com](http://www.gigantic.com) or [www.margatewintergardens.co.uk](http://www.margatewintergardens.co.uk) or phone the Winter Gardens box office on 01843 292795.



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# Church on Sunday

Advertising Feature

**T**HIS month will see us celebrating Easter, which is as important a festival to Christians as Christmas – indeed some would say it is the greatest event of the religious calendar.

It celebrates the resurrection of Jesus Christ on the third day following his crucifixion at Calvary. The story is at the very heart of Christianity and, of course, related in the New Testament.

The three-day festival starts with Good Friday, which represents the day that Jesus was crucified.

His body was taken from the cross to be buried in a cave tomb guarded by Roman soldiers, while a huge stone was placed over the entrance so that no one could take the body.

On the third day – now celebrated as Easter Sunday – Mary Magdalene visited the tomb and discovered that the stone had been moved and Jesus's body had gone.

Later, some of Jesus's disciples came and confirmed that his body was indeed not there any more, the enormous stone having somehow been moved.

But Jesus was alive and seen later

that day by Mary and the disciples, and for 40 days afterwards by many people.

Jesus's followers realised that God had raised him from the dead – an act referred to as the Resurrection.

Holy Week is the week leading up to Easter and there will be many events and services across Kent in that period.

And on Good Friday and Easter Sunday, of course, there will be services in almost all of the county's churches. It's a special time, so why not find the nearest service to you and go along?



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» For more food and drink articles pick up a copy of this month's

KENT LIFE

## Sarah Sturt, the editor of our sister publication Kent Life, meets Stephanie Hayman, the worthy recipient of our Food and Drink Hero Award for 2013

**L**ONG before Jamie Oliver had made us all sit up and take notice of the state of school dinners in the UK, Stephanie

Hayman had her own very real concerns – and wasn't afraid to voice them.

Showing the forward thinking that made her our natural choice to receive the first Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Hero Award, Stephanie's journey began when her son Harry began primary school.

"I wanted him to have a hot meal at lunchtime, but the menus weren't very inspiring," she told me over coffee in Deal.

"I knew about the health risks of eating hydrogenated vegetable oil as early as the mid-1990s because I'd spent a lot of time travelling to America – and they are way ahead of the game – and knew that trans fats are very undesirable in a diet."

Stephanie wrote to the caterers and asked to be informed which of their pre-processed products on the school-lunch menu contained hydrogenated vegetable oils because she just wanted to advise her son to choose the alternative.

"The response was 'If your son needs a special diet, please go to your doctor and get a certificate' – which in other words was a no."

"I thought you're not fit to be providing a service that has a significant impact on our children's health at school."

Harry stopped having school dinners, his mum became a parent governor and when the school-meals contract came up for re-tender, Stephanie recommended the school (part of a contract of 21 others in east Kent) should take it on in-house.

"I could see the potential of using seasonal fresh produce and supporting local suppliers," she said.

"This was 2004, before Jamie was doing his thing. I'd bang on about trans fats and people would simply glaze over – it was so different back then."

"Then Jamie Oliver exposed the truth behind school meals and all of a sudden I started to be heard."

This was the start of a whole change of direction for Stephanie, who grew up in Deal, studied at London School of Economics, had a career in social housing before becoming a mum in her 30s and then moved back to Deal, where her mother still lives.

Settling in Walmer, she did a Masters in information systems at Christchurch University and worked part-time at South Kent College teaching business and IT.

Now the self-confessed "meat and two veg, basic sort of cook" has a very different life, beginning with that first letter as a concerned mum and swiftly leading to the creation of Whole School Meals C.I.C in 2005.

This was born out of her idea to create a company all 21 schools in the contract collectively owned, serving the school community in



Picture: RIKARD OSTERLUND

## Meet the true pioneer of our school-meals revolution

east Kent. Directors were appointed, a bid was put in and to their surprise they heard in April 2006 that they'd won and started serving school meals that September.

**“This was 2004, before Jamie's thing. I'd bang on about trans fats and people would simply glaze over.”**

Whole School Meals is a social enterprise, with 75 per cent of the company owned by the group of schools it serves, meaning the

schools control the company.

It wasn't all plain sailing, however.

"We spent two years lurching from one cashflow crisis to another," said Stephanie.

But sales gradually went up; after two years they broke even, after three they made a small profit and could start new initiatives, such as taster sessions for parents.

Whole School Meals now turns over more than £1 million, 3,000 children are being fed every day and there are 25 schools in the group, all shareholders.

School meals are today only one part of Stephanie's remit and after success in setting up classes teaching children to cook, thanks

to funding from the Big Lottery, she turned her attention to adults.

By that stage she had got to know South African chef Pieter van Zyl, owner of local restaurant The Chequers, and knew that they shared similar food values.

**T**ogether they started Keen2Cook, at that time a six-week course for people who were low-income and disadvantaged.

The next step was to create a cookery school at The Chequers that, alongside the restaurant, would generate enough income to enable them to continue the subsidised lessons.

Last summer they created Cinque Ports Community Kitchens, a community-interest company that rents The Chequers from Pieter.

They spent from April to December running the restaurant, getting money in the bank to finance the refurbishment. This was in full swing at the time of my visit, and by the time you read this the relaunch should have taken place.

With the former large bar now removed they have been able to add a cooking island big enough for 12 people to use at a time.

The restaurant will open from Thursday to Sunday for lunch and dinner and the rest of the time will be available for cookery classes. Some will be workshops, classes and demos that people will pay to attend, but the subsidised Keen2 Cook classes will also be held there.

"From September the curriculum requires all children must be able to cook five meals by the time they leave primary school," said Stephanie. "We're hoping schools can come here and do some of the learning with us."

**■ Don't forget, your votes are wanted for this year's Kent Life and Kent on Sunday Food & Drink Awards. For a nominations form, visit [www.kentnews.co.uk](http://www.kentnews.co.uk).**



**■ An extended version of this article can be enjoyed in April's Kent Life... it's out now!**  
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# Welcome return to old haunt shows country pub has stood test of time

## The Pepperbox Inn

**Location:** Harrietsham, near Maidstone

By **Tim Miles**

**T**HE Pepperbox Inn near Harrietsham is one of those pubs I had kept meaning to go back to.

Many years ago, before mortgages and childcare concerns, my future wife and I enjoyed quite a few evenings there.

Then things changed – little people came along – and I stopped going to pubs and time's winged chariot rolled on. What only seemed a little while since my last visit had actually turned into quite a few years.

Be that as it may, things haven't changed... and that's a good thing.

The pub is still a proper brick,

stone and wood-beam country pub, the atmosphere is still warm and welcoming and the food and drink are excellent.

What's more, the Pepperbox is an all-year-round pub; in the summer, the views of the Weald of Kent are outstanding from the smart and comfortable terrace, while in winter there's a roaring fire and comfy chairs.

It's not the biggest of pubs, but it is very popular, which means it does get a little busy, so be prepared to say more than a few 'scusemes' and mumbled 'thank you's'.

And so to the food...

My guest started with the Thai fishcakes and a lime mayonnaise, while I opted for tiger prawns in garlic, chilli and ginger butter.

The fishcakes looked the part and, as can sometimes be the case, were not as large as to be a threat to the main course. More importantly, they tasted very good.

My guest was also rather taken with the lime mayo. The prawns were plump, meaty and full of flavour. So, spot on there, then.

For our main courses we had the herb-crusted veal rib, tomato, caper and olive sauce, with sautés, and a fillet steak with chips and salad.

Both were delicious and I have to say it was one of the best steaks I've

had in a long time. My guest's veal was tender and well matched to its sauce, not forgetting a quick mention for the sautés, which were crisp and golden.

For pudding, my guest chose a vanilla and raspberry crème brûlée and I went for a selection of cheeses.

The brûlée hit the spot with my guest, who explained between mouthfuls how the mixture of its sweetness and tartness cut perfectly through the richness of the veal.

As I wasn't given the chance to try it, I can only assume it was as good as it looked!

The cheese was enjoyable, with the usual selection of hard and soft, and a nice blue, too.

We then enjoyed a little break and finished with a latte each.

The food had been good, while the service was attentive, polite and efficient.

The cost for two starters, two mains (I did go for a steak), two desserts, a bottle of house Merlot and two coffees was £84.

It has been a while since my last visit to the Pepperbox; it won't be anywhere near as long before my next visit.

■ **The Pepperbox Inn**  
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Your essential guide to  
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## Spring into life



**Only way is Chelsea**  
Titchmarsh goes back to roots  
**See page 44 »**



**Gardening champs**  
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# Add a touch of texture to your garden

**I**TALIAN garden-designer Luciano Giubbilei is famous for his creations of understated simple and clean symmetrical design complemented by his use of nature, materials, space and art.

His style is modern but uses formal approaches and clipped plants, while dominated by trees, hedges and grasses, with frequent repeat planting – and there is an all-important texture to all his gardens.

"Texture is not something that we just look at, it's something that we experience," said Giubbilei.

"Certain surfaces make you observe where you are going to be walking, for example. Smooth surfaces are easy to walk on, which will encourage you to look further afield to observe a space more in depth."

Texture isn't solely focused on the physical feel of something, either.

"Texture is associated with emotion. The way we experience space isn't just visual," he said.

Giubbilei has used this vision to create the Laurent-Perrier show garden at this year's RHS Chelsea Flower show, comprising a simple geometric layout juxtaposed with detail that explores the contrasting concepts of stillness and movement, elegance and rawness.

The walls of concrete and metal

**Hannah Stephenson** asks top designer Luciano Giubbilei for tips on how you can create a textured garden, combining lustrous hard materials with some carefully-chosen plants

combine lustres and materials; the stone surfaces are executed with contrasting finishes; the flow and reflection of the water gives light and animation to the space.

The planting features delicate forms alongside bolder architectural leaves – providing a colour spectrum of yellows, creams and whites, punctuated by accents of blue, with a backdrop of deep green foliage.

A strong wooden sculpture designed by highly-acclaimed American artist Ursula von Rydingsvard will also contribute to the garden's exploration of texture.

Giubbilei insists you don't need designers of the highest level to make texture work, though, and says it can be created in any garden, even the smallest space.

"If I just had a patio and I wanted to create texture, the only thing I need is one beautiful tree. That would create the texture. In a courtyard garden, if you bring in a beautiful tree the winter structure

will be the bark, which will create the texture, followed by the leaves or flowers or berries, creating a play on light, shadowing the area in a different way," he said.

You should choose patio plants carefully to create different textures. Cluster groups of pots together

**'You have to think about how the light can move on concrete, rather than the concrete as a material'**

combining clipped evergreens with more fluid plants such as ferns.

In a wider space, placing clipped plants such as box or beech hedging next to wilder varieties such as ferns, which are softer and less uniform, will create an effective contrast of stillness and movement.

If you include concrete in hard landscaping you need to put another element close to it to create shadows on the surface.

Giubbilei said: "You have to think about how the light can move on the concrete, rather than the concrete as a material. Light and reflection are very important elements in the way we feel."

"People can create a mood in their garden using green, big-leaved plants such as hostas, ligularia and darmera [umbrella plant], which give you weight in a border. That weight also creates a feeling of calm."

Add plants with a fine and feathery structure, such as asters or cosmos, which will play with the light.

Ornamental grasses such as miscanthus and calamagrostis can also create a feeling of space.

"The big leaves of the darmera can be used with the feathery plants and will create different textures at different times of the day," he said.

In the Laurent-Perrier garden, the



hard materials include a concrete wall and a cedar-wood sculpture with a backdrop of concrete.

Giubbilei believes in using of straight lines in his designs.

"I understand geometric. From the moment you start to make curves on the drawing board, either you are a natural talent or it's very difficult to mimic something natural. For me, the straight line has an honesty about it, but the curve is trying to mimic."

■ The RHS Chelsea Flower Show runs from May 20-24.



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# Alan going back to his roots at Chelsea

For the past 30 years Alan Titchmarsh has been the face of BBC 2's coverage of the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, but this year he will be doing what he loves best – creating his own garden for the world-famous show. By **Hannah Stephenson**.



**T**V GARDENING guru Alan Titchmarsh is looking forward to getting his hands dirty at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show this year.

Instead of wearing a sharp suit to present the show, for the first time in 30 years he will be wearing a pair of gloves and designing a garden.

Obviously, there's a substantial chance it will be rather good, too – not only is Titchmarsh one of the country's best-known gardening presenters, but back in 1985, when he last designed a garden at the prestigious show, he was awarded an RHS Gold Medal for his Country Kitchen creation.

Titchmarsh will also be joining forces with another RHS Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medal-winner, Kate Gould, to create From The Moors To The Sea – a celebration of 50 years of the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign, to both represent how 300,000 volunteers help make Britain bloom and explore his relationship with horticulture through his life.

"It's 50 years since I started work as an apprentice, so I thought I could either do a 1960s-style garden through to the 21st century, but the 60s were a bit dull, all rose beds and lawns.

"So I thought 'Why don't I demonstrate where I first started?'

which was the Yorkshire moors, up to where I garden now, on the coast on the Isle of Wight?

"So we will be sloping from moorland at the back, with drystone walls, coming down to a seaside garden at the front.

"It's 50 years of 'my journey', to use the X-Factor phrase.

"It's also showing the British Isles and its variety. Being a cool temperate set of islands, the range we can grow is incredibly wide and this will show its diversity."

**'It's better to stop doing something when you're still regarded as being successful, while people are still watching, rather than it going off the boil. It will be my 15th [radio] series in the autumn – that's eight years. I thought "Stop while it's doing well".'**

His garden will feature pines, heathers and birches from the moorland, through wild flowers, down to seaside plants including echiums and cabbage palms. It will be a 10-metre x 15-metre microcosm of British gardens and landscapes.

It sounds great, but how does the TV star feel about not presenting the Chelsea coverage for the first time in 30 years?

Last year Titchmarsh announced he was stepping down from the BBC's

show after programme-makers offered him a more 'limited' role, although he remains RHS vice-president and first ambassador.

"[I feel] wonderful," he insisted.

"I'm putting this show garden together – I've done it before and I love doing it.

"It's technically an exhibit but will look like a show garden. It's not being judged, but the same criteria and standard of finish will have to be there.

"I've moved on. There was

he has a regular slot on Classic FM. He's had eight years presenting an afternoon chat show, too, though this is also ending after its last run in autumn.

"It's better to stop doing something when you're still regarded as being successful, while people are still watching, rather than it going off the boil. It will be my 15th series in the autumn – that's eight years.

"It's every day. Jonathan Ross and Graham Norton do one a week. I do five. I thought 'Let's stop while it's doing well'."

He certainly has enough to keep him occupied, with forthcoming TV projects including a two-part about the gardens of Buckingham Palace, out in December, a new series of Love Your Garden in the summer and a series called Britain's Best Gardens for ITV, in which he explores 30 of Britain's best domestic gardens.

He has just launched a new gardening range with Waitrose, though he won't reveal if his Chelsea garden will feature any of the new products.

Incredibly, he sees all this as 'slowing down', saying that with three grandchildren to enjoy and his landmark 65th birthday coming up in May he hopes to cut down his workload.

"I'll never stop, but I want to pace myself a bit more."

## Pottering around...

### What to do this week

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs over three years old as they finish flowering
- Sow sweet peas directly into their flowering position
- Sprout maincrop potatoes and plant sprouted tubers of early varieties
- Sow and plant out vegetables including beetroot, broad beans, carrots, celeriac, onions, peas, spinach and swedes
- Sow seeds of tomatoes in a heated propagator or on a warm windowsill to grow outdoors when all danger of frost has passed
- Tidy up ivy growing on walls, using shears
- Clear remaining crops such as leek and celery so the ground can be prepared for new ones
- Keep the children amused by sowing some giant sunflowers with them, under glass or outdoors when conditions allow
- Give roses a top dressing of fertiliser
- Thin early lettuce sowings





# Appliance of bathroom science for that ideal room

**I**N most homes the chance to create a 'showhome' bathroom is often limited by space, the majority of people only changing this room because of its colour or the layout is not suitable to daily needs.

An average bathroom will have a bath, basin, pedestal and toilet, the positioning of which can rarely be altered without additional expense.

So to create a bathroom with design and flair you have to use some of the new specialist products manufacturers have introduced that

can help homeowners make their bathrooms more adapted to their needs... often without great expense.

One of the most significant changes has been with showers. Aqualisa, based in Westerham, is probably the market leader in digital showers. Its introduction of exposed digital-powered showers, which can be retrofitted over baths, has provided customers with a great showering experience without lots of additional pipework and labour.

The beauty of digital showers is that, compared with a traditional

shower, where the valves are built into the wall, these have a processor, which controls temperature and flow rate, and are installed either in the loft space or the airing cupboard, reducing disruption and making maintenance incredibly easy.

They also come with a five-year warranty.

Another change has been the number of shower enclosures designed to replace a bath; you can have an enclosure that takes up the footprint of the existing bath.

However, not every bathroom can

accommodate this, so there are alternatives that provide you with plenty of space – from rectangular to P-shaped enclosures that give you a large showering area but with small overall dimensions.

To add some personal flair to your bathroom, more companies now offer bespoke tile solutions. You choose your field tile and then have the tile cut to take a mosaic insert, ensuring that your tile finish is unique to you.

Also new to the market has been the arrival of the shower bath.

Originally developed by Ideal Standard, the design has been modified and manufacturers have created many different-shaped baths that double up as baths with a generous shower area.

But be careful – there are baths that are good shower areas but not very comfortable baths. One of the best is the Arco by Pura, which offers you the best of both worlds.

So if you want to update your bathroom, visit a local showroom and talk to an adviser who understands your needs – and solve your problems.

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# Are you champions of the garden?

Our sister publication **Kent Life** is on the search for gardeners as good as last year's winners of Kent's Garden of the Year and Best Primary School Garden. Could it be you? If so, enter this competition...

Pictures: LEIGH CLAPP



## Amateur Garden of the Year

"We first heard [editor] Sarah Sturt talking about the Kent Life garden competition with Andy Garland on BBC Radio Kent's Sunday gardening programme," said Eileen Prosser, who, with husband Phil, was the worthy winner of the 2013 contest. The pair are pictured left.

"Our initial thoughts were that our garden wasn't large or grand enough, but we love our garden and hoped the judges would, too.

"When we had the phone call to say we were one of the five runners-up we were delighted.

"The lovely tea at Hadlow College was a wonderful experience and when we heard we had won, well, that was the icing on the cake, such a wonderful feeling and one we will never forget.

"We bought a beautiful statue with our vouchers and our bench takes pride of place on the patio. So even if you do not have a large grand garden, don't be put off entering – if you love your garden, then who knows, the judges might, too."



## Primary School Garden of the Year

"We really enjoyed taking part in the competition.

"Since winning, the profile of the garden has risen among the parents and children and most lunchtimes and playtimes there is an increasing number of children wanting to garden," said Paul Curtis, from St Mary's Catholic Primary School, the 2013 Primary School

Garden of the Year winners.

"I would recommend all schools enter this competition. Having the photographer and Kent Life's editor visiting the school together was a fantastic experience for our children and while winning was such a shock, it was equally amazing that their hard work had been rewarded."

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Important Information

ENTRIES are now being invited for this year's 2014 Kent Life Amateur Garden of the Year and Best Primary School Garden competitions.

This is the fifth year that our sister publication Kent Life has run the awards, and this year the event has new supporters.

Joining sponsor Hadlow College, which has backed the competition from year one and provided the venue and high tea for the afternoon prize-giving ceremony, are Bybrook Barn Garden Centre and Kent Life's Charity of the Year, chYps or Children's Hospice at Home.

The Ashford garden centre is generously providing the two overall winners' benches, plus vouchers to spend at the store for the winners and runners-up.

Don't miss your chance to win some of the fabulous prizes – enter today!

**RULES**  
Closing date for entries: Friday, June 13

Eight finalists will be selected and visited by the judging panel, headed by Roger Platts, award-winning garden designer, grower and plantsman, after June 13.

All finalists' gardens will be photographed by Kent Life by Tuesday, July 1. Finalists will be invited to a celebratory high tea at Hadlow College on Thursday, September 18, when the winners and runners-up will be announced.

Photographs and sketches cannot be returned, and by submitting them you are agreeing to their use in Kent Life and its associated website and publications.

**CRITERIA**  
The panel will look at the overall design, planting, maintenance, special features and personal connection. For schools, children's involvement and ecological and educational processes will also be considered.

**HOW TO ENTER**  
Fill in the entry form below and either email your entry to editor@kent-life.co.uk or post to Kent Life Garden Competition, Kent Life, Archant Kent, Apple Barn, Hythe Road, Smeeth, near Ashford TN25 6SS.  
You can also visit www.kent-life.co.uk.

Category One  
Garden of the Year

Open to all amateur gardeners, whatever the size of your garden.

- How to enter**

  - Complete the entry form overleaf
  - Attach a written description of your garden and what it means to you
  - Include up to six photographs taken either last season or this year that show overviews and details
  - Add a sketch plan if possible
  - Send in by post, email or enter online at: www.kent-life.co.uk
- First prize**

  - Engraved bench as trophy
  - Framed personalised certificate
  - £250 Bybrook Barn Garden Centre vouchers
  - Pictorial feature in Kent Life

**Four runners-up**

  - Framed personalised certificate
  - £100 Bybrook Barn Garden Centre vouchers

Category Two  
Primary School Garden of the Year

Open to all primary schools in Kent where gardening is part of your curriculum and where the children are actively involved in a gardening club.

- How to enter**

  - Complete the entry form below
  - Attach a written description of the school garden and any supporting programmes
  - Include up to six photographs
  - Optional: add some pictures/input from the children
  - Send in by post or email or enter online at www.kent-life.co.uk
- First prize**

  - Engraved bench as trophy
  - Framed personalised certificate
  - £250 Bybrook Barn Garden Centre vouchers
  - Pictorial feature in Kent Life

**Two runners-up**

  - Framed personalised certificate
  - £100 Bybrook Barn Garden Centre vouchers



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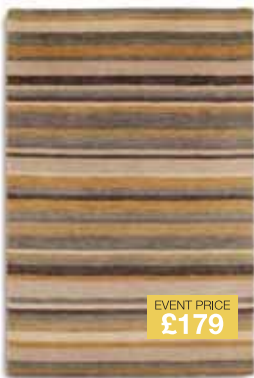
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Entry Form 2014

Category 1 Garden of the Year ☐ Category 2 Primary School Garden of the Year ☐

Your name: .....

Address: .....

Postcode: .....

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

\*DON'T FORGET! Have you also included?

Description ☐ Photos ☐ Plan of the garden ☐

\* Entries are invalid without all supporting materials and images

**Julia Gray** explains how a spring change of boiler should provide huge savings for years to come

# Spend and save before you reach boiling point

**I**F the current warm weather and the swathes of blooming flowers are any indication, spring is definitely here.

But does that mean you can put up with an old boiler? Can you just switch off the heating and forget about any problems until the nights draw in again?

No, it doesn't.

A boiler that is 15 years old or more is only 60-70 per cent efficient, meaning as much as 30-40 pence of every pound spent on heating and hot water is wasted. Many older boilers also have a standing pilot light, which can cost about £50-£60 a year to keep going.

"Updating to an A-rated condensing boiler could make your heating system up to 90 per cent efficient, so it's well worth considering," said Martyn Bridges, director of technical support at Worcester, Bosch Group.

The size of your home, especially the number of bathrooms and

shower rooms, and how much heating and hot water your family uses, will largely determine your choice of boiler, of which there are three main types: system, regular, and combination (or combi).

But which is right for you?

"You don't have to replace like for like," said Bridges.

**'Replacing a dated floor-standing model is an ideal opportunity to get the boiler off the floor and free up some space. And if you choose a combi boiler there is no need for a hot-water cylinder.'**

"Replacing a dated floor-standing model is an ideal opportunity to get the boiler off the floor and free up some space for more cupboards or worktops. And if you choose a combination boiler, there is no need for a hot-water cylinder. If the cylinder was in the bathroom, you may even free up enough space for a

walk-in shower."

Also, with a combi you heat water on demand, so you only pay for what you use and deliver it at mains pressure. While combis are ideal for homes with one bathroom or shower room, they can also be suitable for homes with two, providing they're powerful enough.



the cylinder has a chance to refill, which shouldn't happen with a combi because it supplies on demand.

"Regular boilers also require more space than combi or system boilers, as they often need an expansion tank in the loft, and are suitable for homes with more than two bathrooms and where hot-water usage is high but water pressure is low," said Bridges.

"In contrast, system boilers have most of the major components of the

heating and hot-water system built in, making them more efficient and less space-consuming, as there's no need for a tank in the loft."

If in doubt, ask an experienced heating engineer for advice about boilers. And remember to factor in future changes you may make, such as adding bathrooms or shower rooms, or expanding your family – the more people there are, the more hot water they will use.

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Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances, and a daytime phone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit all letters.

## Airport should go back to farmland

THE planned closure of Manston Airport comes as no real surprise, as without substantial support by both local and national government it can not really function as a fully operational airport.

Consider the situation. Firstly, the transport to it is pathetic. The rail service is nothing short of a national disgrace as it now takes trains 30 minutes longer to reach its nearest station, Birchington, from London than they used to in the 1950s.

The road system is totally inadequate; the M2/A299 have only two lanes from the junction of the A249 at Sittingbourne and if someone sneezes on the stretch between junctions five and six of the M2 the motorway closes and people would probably miss their plane.

The terminal buildings do not have the capacity to allow a much increased flight frequency and the runway, at 2,748 meters, is only long enough for small, short-range planes. Only the 767-200 and 767-300, both capable of trans-Atlantic routes, could take off fully-laden.

Without major reconstruction of the airport buildings and the runway, together with an enormous improvement of the transport infrastructure – which will never happen – the best Manston could ever hope to be is a feeder for Schiphol in Amsterdam. If Manston closes, I expect Southend to replace it.

The only real option now is to dig the airport up and return it to the farmers to grow much-needed food.

**Jackie Davidson, Sittingbourne**

## Nigel, you seem to have a problem

THE jobs fair held in the TN2 Community Centre in Sherwood recently was well received, with more than 400 people attending and 20 offered jobs that could start almost immediately.

It was overshadowed, however, by activists from Ukup, including a recently-elected county councillor, picketing the entrance and trying to stop people actually entering.

They were allegedly picketing about the Knights Park development being undertaken by Dandara with the idea they could stop the planning permission granted last week.

It think it is extremely sad that a political activist would try to persuade people from taking up good jobs locally, whoever is offering them.

If this is the standard of representation

## LETTER OF THE WEEK



## Lose Manston and wipe Thanet off map

THOUSANDS of people are signing Save Manston petitions, but the only two letters that get printed in Kent on Sunday celebrate its imminent closure.

The one sure way of getting Thanet off the map is to close the airport and correspondent Miss Williams incomprehensibly suggests a solar-panel farm (staff requirement less than one) would provide more jobs than those lost, or replacing it with speedway or greyhounds – with their declining popularity – and one cannot imagine a site less attractive to Centre Parcs.

If she is so bothered by aircraft coming near her house, then what thought does she give to people who she flies over? Or if she doesn't, then the extension of her argument is to ban aviation.

The Green candidate then wants to rip a new rail route through the Wye valley instead of building a new station, unaware that with a supportive council a new station was enough to enable Southend's airport to thrive, providing more jobs in a less

favourable location. Any Plan B will inevitably involve some housing development and so much reference to extending the enterprise zone, of which even Sir Roger Gale has been guilty, can only encourage Ann Gloag to hold out for a change of use enabling her to asset-strip our airport.

Thanet District Council leadership claims to support the airport, but its website still says more about enterprise zones more suitable for alternative uses than really saving it. Similarly, KCC leader Paul Carter is said to support it but his media statements have been unconvincing.

Manston is a critical piece of regional infrastructure that affects many jobs outside Thanet and any decision must be taken at a higher level than a gerrymandered, pseudo-consultation.

When the news broke, TDC could have offered the airport hardship relief on its £600,000pa business rates to keep it going. I doubt it even thought of it.

**Peter Jull, Deal**

Ukup are offering the electorate, then 'Nigel, you have a problem'.

**David Jukes, leader, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council**

## Potholes? What about us cyclists!

I HOPE that Kent Highways, on

receipt of its share of the '£8.6 million to help the menace of road potholes', will pay attention to my letter to them pointing out the size of potholes that affect cyclists like me are smaller than those affecting cars.

I could be much more seriously injured, even killed, by coming off my bike than anyone in a four-wheeled vehicle hitting a pothole.

Apart from anything else, how much would that cost the NHS?

**Marika Sherwood, Oare**

## What price the safety of public?

WITH reference to withdrawing street-lighting as a 'trial' (which we all know will be permanent), how irritating to read David Brazier, KCC cabinet member, stating "we consulted widely and it is obvious there is support for the idea". Where?

Everyone seems to believe this was executed without any public consultation whatsoever.

Withdrawing street-lighting is a public safety and crime issue – coming home in the dark is extremely unnerving, with uneven pavements and footpaths, as well as encouraging criminals to be able to execute their activities under the cover of darkness.

At the end of this 'trial' I'd be very interested to learn of the extra crime and accident statistics, and have to question exactly what price public safety?

**B Robins, Gravesend**

## Best to fight from inside the Union

TOO many of us, including myself, have known the pain of losing a loved one in a road accident. About 40 people die on Britain's roads every week.

Better vehicle design can save some of these lives.

The same vehicles are sold across Europe, so we have to get the rules right in Europe. It is good news that MEPs in the European Parliament transport committee have approved safer lorry designs to help protect vulnerable road-users.

Lorry-drivers' sightlines will be improved by reducing blind spots under the front windscreen and sides of lorry cabs. The new designs will also include safer cab fronts to reduce damage caused by impacts with cyclists and pedestrians. This is good for us all, not least drivers.

These changes were pushed for by Liberal Democrat MEPs. It was a shame that other MEPs failed to vote for them in committee – will they change their minds before the final vote at Strasbourg next month?

If we left Europe we would lose jobs in vehicle manufacture (more than ever are being made in the UK) and lose our say when these life-saving rules are made.

**Anthony Hook, Lib Dem MEP candidate for South East England, Deal**

## KOS 10 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

AS part of our commitment to providing the best service to you, we have produced our 10 guiding principles which tie in with our parent company Archant's overall mission statement.

Archant's mission statement is: "We bring together motivated buyers and sellers through the creation of unique and compelling content and community expertise." This is summed up in the strapline "Inspiring Communities".

The way KoS will create our unique and compelling content is to follow these 10 principles: **Kent on Sunday will:**

- 1) Be available in every postcode in Kent.
- 2) Be fair, accurate and balanced.
- 3) Be written in clear, concise English.
- 4) Not be overly sensational.
- 5) Have a sense of humour.
- 6) Have an easily understood division between

news, comment and advertising.

- 7) Seek to celebrate as well as constructively criticise.
- 8) Highlight topical issues of concern to people living in the county.
- 9) Spotlight individual cases which raise broader concerns.
- 10) Champion causes that it feels are important to the well-being of the county and its people.





## Dungeness

by

**Phillippa Goddard**  
from New Romney

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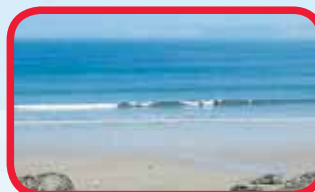
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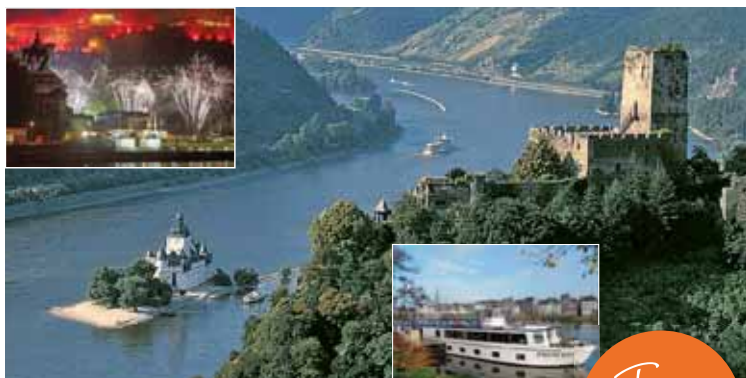
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**PRIVATE  
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QUOTE: LC6-KOS

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**INCLUDED:** Escorted throughout • Return Eurostar to Paris and Thello rail travel to Verona, returning from Milan in a 2-berth overnight sleeper cabin  
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QUOTE:  
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# business

## Delight for bank after it secures £14.5m funding

By Chris Britcher

[chris.britcher@archant.co.uk](mailto:chris.britcher@archant.co.uk)

A BANK in Tonbridge that lends solely to charity organisations has been given a boost by the news that it is to benefit from a £14.5 million cash injection.

Charity Bank, which attracts deposits from socially-conscious individuals, will benefit from Big Society Capital after it confirmed it would be the beneficiary of its largest-ever single investment.

Up to £14.5m of ordinary shares will be acquired in three successive tranches between 2014 and 2016. The first tranche of £4.5m has already been made.

Big Society Capital is a financial institution unveiled by the Government in 2012, set up to help grow the social investment market so that charities and social enterprises that want to borrow money or take on investment can access the finance they need to do more.

It has so far committed almost £150m in investments to specialist organisations that lend to charities



**INVESTMENT:** Bank cashes in

and social enterprises.

This investment in Charity Bank represents a significant step in its goal to increase the amount it lends to charities from its current level of about £55m to some £250m by December 2018.

To reach this level, the bank will seek to attract more deposits from personal savers.

Patrick Crawford, Charity Bank's chief executive, said: "As the demand for loans increases, the need for more deposits will also increase. We are looking to attract around another £90m in deposits from savers by the end of 2016 and another £100m over the following two years.

"Charity Bank is aiming to become the UK's most admired bank by helping its borrowers achieve greater positive social impacts by using the deposits of its socially-conscious savers who want a good social return on their investments as well as a financial one."

Nick O'Donohoe, Big Society Capital's chief executive, added: "For over 10 years, Charity Bank has played a crucial role in ensuring charities and social enterprises can access the finance they need to tackle some of the toughest problems in the UK.

"As a financial institution, Charity Bank is unique in its focus on lending to good causes and its clear social mission that runs through all of its activities. It is now poised to become a strong, meaningful force in UK ethical banking. This investment reflects our support for Charity Bank's plans."

## Entrepreneurs explode into life

THOUSANDS of unemployed people across the South East have stopped claiming benefits after setting up their own business using Government support... and Kent is among one of the most active, according to figures.

The New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) has helped create 920 new businesses in Kent since it launched in 2011 as part of the Government's long-term economic plan to back small businesses and help people into work.

## Partner scoops women's award

MAIDSTONE legal firm Brachers has been cheered by its first female managing partner, Joanna Worby, scooping a top award.

She was named the winner in the management/leadership category at the 2014 Kent Women in Business Awards.

The awards, now in their second year, celebrate the success and achievements of women in business across the county.

## IoD calls for fresh focus on challenge facing rural SMEs

A SUSTAINABLE economic future for Kent's rural industries is being called for by the Kent branch of the Institute of Directors (IoD).

The call comes after a tough winter and amid challenging conditions.

Emma Liddiard, IoD Kent branch chairman, said: "The rural economy is vital for Kent businesses.

"Many of our businesses are small or medium enterprises (SMEs) and are based in rural economies.

"They provide a vital lifeline for jobs, supporting local communities and supply chains. Without these SMEs, many other businesses in the rural sector would have a tough task surviving.

"The recent change in climate is also challenging.

"Many IoD Kent branch members are in the rural sector and are vital to the Kent economy. They usually have their fingers on the pulse of Kent and are integral to helping the county change and react to these challenges."

Those members include Hadlow College's financial director, Mark Lumsdon-Taylor.

He said: "We need to raise the public's perspective of the importance of land management. The country has got to look at environmental management because of the change in climate, and this recent spell of heavy rain and flooding has raised awareness of the issues further. With the climate getting more brutal, we need to respond effectively to meeting this.

"It is an opportunity to take stock of how we manage our land and find more effective ways of being greener, for example water-recycling and alternative energy.

"If we don't respond to the climate change, we run the risk of these issues not being managed effectively with the right people in the right jobs proactively planning from a local-authority perspective."



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<sup>†</sup>Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures are obtained for comparative purposes in accordance with EC directives/regulations and may not be representative of real-life driving conditions. Factors such as driving style, weather and road conditions may also have a significant effect on fuel consumption.

\*With Alfa Romeo Preferenza you have the option to return the vehicle and not pay the final payment, subject to the vehicle not having exceeded an agreed annual mileage (a charge of 6p per mile for exceeding 6,000 miles per annum in these examples) and being in good condition. Offers may be withdrawn or amended without prior notification. Offer subject to status, a guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Terms and Conditions apply. Alfa Romeo Financial Services, PO Box 4465, Slough SL1 0RW. Offer applies to vehicles registered between 1st April 2014 – 30th June 2014.

<sup>†</sup>Offer price of £15,550 is based on an Alfa MiTo 875cc TB TwinAir 105 bhp Sportiva & includes the £750 customer saving and includes 12 months' road fund licence, first vehicle registration fee, delivery, number plates and VAT. Figures correct at time of printing. Offer subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. See our website for full details.

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REPRESENTATIVE EXAMPLE





By Steve Loader  
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

## 1st Drive

### Mini Hatchback

Price:	£15,300
Driving appeal:	★★★★
Image:	★★★★
Space:	★★★★
Value:	★★★★
Running costs:	★★★★
How green?:	★★★★
Best rival:	Citroën DS3

» Read more of Steve's motoring reviews in...

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**LITTLE WONDER:** The all-new flagship MINI Cooper S, pictured here, carries on a long-standing Mini tradition stretching all the way back to 1959

# MINI blockbuster series

BMW revived the classic Swinging Sixties Mini styling and in doing so created a 21st-century MINI craze; it is now celebrating a third happy incarnation

IT'S the most popular motoring soap opera of all – the MINI adventure.

It started in 1959, when the tiny original attracted celebrities and image-makers and became a Swinging Sixties icon.

Current brand-owner BMW then launched an all-new MINI in 2001, upholding its Britishness by maintaining production in the UK.

This MINI for modern times has now entered a third generation with an all-new model, backed by a further £750 million investment at MINI plants in Oxford, Swindon and Birmingham – this British icon is good for British jobs, too.

Priced from £15,300, it's all new from the ground up, though echoing the original two-box design by legendary British Motor Corporation engineer Sir Alec Issigonis.

We can expect this latest incarnation to now morph into other spin-offs including a convertible, an SUV and a coupé as before, endowing these with the new car's better technology, engine efficiency and power delivery, driving dynamics, quality and – always a MINI thing – personalisation.

The new car is also more aerodynamic, lighter, quieter and more spacious, something BMW had

to rectify, as overall dimensions have now grown by 98mm (length), 44mm (width) and 7mm (height).

It is the refinement in the ride and cabin ambience that stands out, though, even in the new line-up's hooligan version, the £18,650 192bhp two-litre turbo-charged Cooper S we tested courtesy of Broad Oak MINI of Canterbury and Ashford.

Driving fun is enhanced by three easily-selectable driving modes – Sport, Mid aka Normal and Green.

This is a new feature on the latest-generation car and allows engine output and chassis to be tweaked to suit driver mood or traffic conditions. It is sure to be a big hit, as well as neatly countering a similar feature on a MINI rival, the much-admired Alfa Romeo MiTo.

The Cooper S shows free-revving power plus phenomenal grip and enhances the MINI's reputation for go-kart handling, although each generation stretches ever further beyond go-kart proportions.

On the other hand, driven sensibly, even this sporting flagship delivers an official combined mpg of 49.6.

Indeed, the three new engines in the line-up have cut fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by as much as 27 per cent versus their

## Other view...

### the Petrolhead

The MINI has everything: premium image, power at the top end of the range and the option to personalise it to a high degree.

### She says...

What's there not to like about the MINI? It's one of those cars you don't want to change, really, except to get even better.

### the Eco-warrior

The latest MINI upholds a brand tradition for style and economy, though the latter point doesn't stretch to the Cooper S.

old counterparts, further helped by BMW's 'Minimalism' eco technology.

Aside from the Cooper S powertrain tested here, there is also a 134bhp 1.5-litre three-cylinder petrol engine in the entry-level Cooper – likely to be the best-seller – and a 114bhp 1.5-litre three-cylinder diesel in the Cooper D eco star, with a combined economy of 80.7mpg, plus road-tax-exempt 98g/km CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Inside, BMW has been mindful of the car's youthful image and aimed to create "the most connected car in its segment" with state-of-the-art infotainment and links to smartphones and other devices.

The traditional MINI dashboard with its big round central display is retained, though, even if speed, revs and fuel level are shown directly ahead of the driver, with digital speed and prevailing speed limit also pictured in a Perspex 'head-up' display in the driver's eyeline.

On a practical note, boot space – never a MINI strongpoint – has grown 30 per cent to 211 litres, but that's still short of the rival Citroën DS3's 285 litres, while access to the rear remains a bit of a challenge for adults despite bigger doors.

Will many buyers worry, though, when the MINI image has again been honed to perfection?



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**Closing date for applications Friday 11 April 2014**  
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## Northfleet School for Girls

### Opportunities at Northfleet School for Girls Co-operative Learning Trust Gravesend, Kent

We are a highly successful and ambitious 11-18 school. Our 2012 Ofsted has recognised that Northfleet School for Girls is a "good" school.

Recently rebuilt, the Learning Trust offers an exciting opportunity to teach in a collegiate atmosphere where our motto "Always Learning, Learning All Ways" applies to everyone. The school has a strong sense of community and a belief in the values of self and social responsibility.

### Subject Leader of MFL

Main or Upper Spine plus TLR 2 - £6197 pa

We seek an excellent practitioner who is a dynamic and innovative specialist Language Teacher to lead our established, committed and successful team of native French and Spanish specialists who are supported by a Language Coach. You will be imaginative and ambitious for your subject and able to create challenging and engaging lessons whilst having a clear understanding of AfL and progress data. Spanish and French are taught to all levels of ability to GCSE and are included in our Communication & Culture Domain with English, History and Ethics.

### Teacher of Mathematics

Main or Upper Pay Spine

With possible enhancement for an exceptional candidate

We seek an excellent practitioner to join our established, committed and successful team of five specialist mathematics teachers as we move forward in transforming learning. Mathematics is taught to all levels of ability including AS and A2 in the Sixth Form and is part of our Specialist School Status. A clear understanding of AfL and APP and a commitment to excellent teaching will be core to your success.

### Teacher of Psychology/Sociology

Main or Upper Pay Spine

With possible Subject Leadership recognition

You will be an innovative and imaginative teacher with a clear understanding of AfL and monitoring and evaluating progress data. You will deliver good lessons that challenge our Post 16 students. You will work with the Domain Leader and other Subject Leaders within our Health & Society Domain which includes Health & Social Care, PE and Food Technology.

**FURTHER INFORMATION, INCLUDING APPLICATION FORM & OFSTED REPORT, AVAILABLE ON OUR SCHOOL WEBSITE - www.northfleetgirls.kent.sch.uk**

Closing date for Applications: Noon, Friday 25 April 2014

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## Swale Academies Trust



### Westlands School

Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

### Teaching Assistants

Required for May 2014

Salary £13,162 - £16,305 p.a. (pro rata)  
(equal to £7,944 to £9,841 p.a.  
depending on experience)

Term time only, 27 hrs per week,  
worked over five days.

Two posts are available, one to support pupils, who have specific learning difficulties (dyslexia), across the curriculum, a particular interest in the areas of mathematics and / or science would be an advantage. The second post is to support pupils in the English subject area.

Applicants should have the necessary skills to support in mainstream classes, in small groups or on an individual basis. Candidates would be expected to have good literacy and numeracy skills, and as part of the interview, may be asked to demonstrate their skills in supporting pupils.

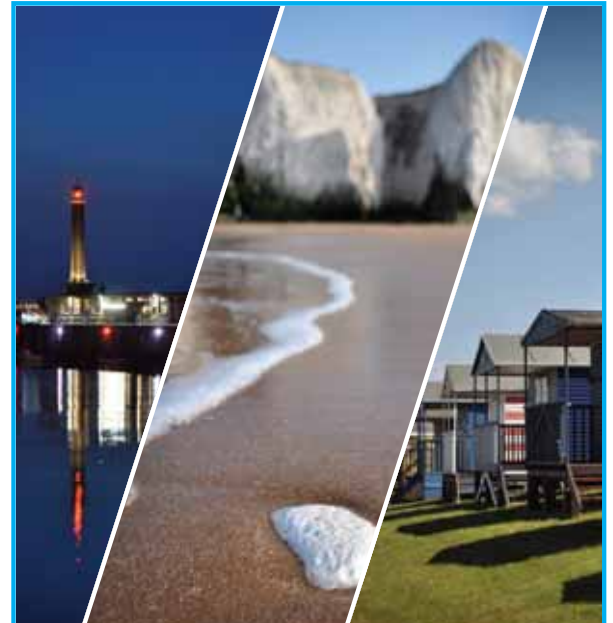
Recruitment packs are available from Westlands School or online (www.westlands.org.uk). Please note that we cannot accept CVs without an application form. Closing date: Friday 25 April 2014 at noon.

Swale Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.

### Contact Details

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461  
Email swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk  
Head of School: Mr S Cox MA  
Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA

Swale Academies Trust Company No 7344732  
Registered Office: Ashdown House,  
Johnson Road, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1JS



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## LEGAL AND PUBLIC NOTICES



### Town and Country planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 – Article 8-Notice of an application for planning permission accompanied by an Environmental Statement

Application Reference:	SW/14/0015	Case No.: 13731
Proposal:	Outline application (with all matters reserved other than access into the site) for a mixed use development comprising: up to 315 dwellings; 11,875sqm of B1a (offices) floorspace; 3,800sqm of B1b (research and development) floorspace; 2,850sqm of B1c (Light industrial) floorspace; a hotel (use class C1) (up to 3,250sqm) of up to 100 bedrooms including an ancillary restaurant; a care home (use class C2) (up to 3,800sqm) of up to 60 rooms including all associated ancillary floorspace; a local convenience store (use class A1) of 200sqm; internal accesses; associated landscaping and open space; areas of play; a noise attenuation bund north of the M2; vehicular and pedestrian accesses from Ashford Road and Brogdale Road; and all other associated infrastructure.	
Location:	Land at Perry Court, (East of Brogdale Road, West of Ashford Road), Faversham, Kent, ME13 8YA	

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT MAY AFFECT THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING  
THIS APPLICATION IS FOR A MAJOR DEVELOPMENT  
THIS APPLICATION MAY BE OF A WIDER PUBLIC INTEREST  
THIS APPLICATION MAY AFFECT A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY  
THE ABOVE DEVELOPMENT MAY AFFECT THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF A CONSERVATION AREA  
THIS APPLICATION IS ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

I give notice that an application accompanied by an Environmental Statement has been submitted to Swale Borough Council for the above development.

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, the plans, and other documents submitted with it at the Planning Services Reception, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, during normal office hours of Sheerness District Officer, Trinity Road, Sheerness. Members of the public can obtain a hard copy of the Environmental Statement for £100.00 and a hard copy of the Technical Appendices £200.00 from:  
Contact: The Planning Secretaries, Barton Willmore LLP, Beansheaf Farmhouse, Bourne Close, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 7BW

Tel: 02074466888

This application can also be viewed via our partnership with the UK Planning website ([www.ukplanning.com/swale](http://www.ukplanning.com/swale)), but this may take up to 7 days to be completed. When using this website please use application reference SW/14/0015. You may submit any observations on the application via the website.

Anyone who wishes to make representations about this application should write to the Planning Services Manager, Planning Services, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT by 21 April 2014.

Please note by law, any letters received have to be made available for inspection by the applicant or any other interested person.

James Freeman,  
Head of Development Services

### Community Right to Bid

**The Royal Oak Public House, Henwood Green Road, Pembury TN2 4LR**

### Notification of intention to dispose of an Asset of Community Value

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council has been notified, by the owners of the Royal Oak Public House, of their intention to dispose of the property, which is listed as an Asset of Community Value in the borough.

A six week moratorium period will close on 25 April 2014 during which time a community group can request in writing to be treated as a potential bidder for the property. If such a request is received by the Council, the moratorium period will be extended to a full 6 months, giving time for the bid to be put together.

Further information on the Community Right to Bid can be found on the Tunbridge Wells Borough Council website at: <http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk/residents/community/community-rights/community-right-to-bid> or contact: [business@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:business@tunbridgewells.gov.uk)

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### HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 – SECTION 116

#### STOPPING UP OF LAND AT LITTLE KNOXBRIDGE BARN, CRANBROOK ROAD, STAPLEHURST

I AM GIVING NOTICE THAT The Kent County Council as Highway Authority for the County of Kent propose to make an application to the Magistrates sitting at Maidstone Magistrates Court on 3 June 2014 at 10:00 for an Order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 to extinguish highway rights on the grounds that they are unnecessary on land at Little Knoxbridge Barn, Cranbrook Road, Staplehurst as edged red on the plan on deposit.

A copy of the draft order and the plan referred to are on deposit, and can be seen during normal office hours, at the main reception of The Kent County Council at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ.

Any person to whom this Notice has been given or who uses the highway specified or who would be aggrieved by the making of the Order may appear before the Magistrates' Court to raise an objection or make a representation on the application. Any person intending to appear before the Magistrate's Court at the hearing of the application is requested to inform Hayley Fairbairn by post to Legal Services, The Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ, by email [Hayley.Fairbairn@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.Fairbairn@kent.gov.uk), or by telephone 01622 696063 before 24 May 2014 quoting reference number LS/21/104770/440.

If you require further information or would like to discuss this matter, please contact Hayley Fairbairn using the contact details shown above.

JOHN BURR

DIRECTOR OF HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Schemes & Member Highway Fund

Ashford Highway Depot

Henwood Industrial Estate

Javelin Way

Ashford

Kent

TN24 8AD



### LICENSING ACT 2003:

#### Application for Premises Licence

Take notice that Old Brompton Central Unionist Club has made an application in accordance with the Licensing Act 2003 for a premises licence for 13 – 15 High Street, Brompton, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5AA

The application is for a Premises Licence for the sale of alcohol and the following licensable activities:

Plays, films, indoor sporting events, live music, recorded music, and the performance of dance on Monday – Sunday 11:00 – 00:30 hrs.

This application has been made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR. Full details of the application and plans can be viewed at Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR during normal hours of business.

Any interested party who wishes to make a representation about this application should do so in writing to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham Kent, ME4 4TR or by sending an email to [licensing@medway.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@medway.gov.uk). no later than 27 April 2014

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application which, upon conviction, carries a maximum fine of £5,000.

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### PLANNING



### TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 PLANNING APPLICATIONS LISTED BUILDING CONSENTS CONSERVATION AREA CONSENTS

DOV/13/00827	Rebuilding of brick work, render and painting of dwelling The Silver Lion, 6 New Street, Deal, CT14 6JY	LCN
DOV/14/00175	Change of use and conversion of two garages into holiday lets Great Everden Farm, Everden, Alkham, CT15 7EH	RSLB
DOV/14/00206	Retrospective application for the rebuilding of brick work, render and painting of dwelling 6 New Street, Deal, CT14 6JY	LCN
DOV/14/00260	Erection of a porch extension 6 Castle Cottages, Castle Road, Richborough, Sandwich, CT13 9JL	ARW
DOV/14/00262	Erection of a visitor centre, re-siting of existing play equipment and alterations to internal access road and parking (existing visitor centre to be demolished) Fowlmead Country Park, Sandwich Road, Sholden, Deal, CT14 0BF	MAJ
DOV/14/00271	Erection of a single storey rear infill extension Carers' Support (Canterbury, Dover & Thanet), 80 Middle Street, Deal, CT14 6HL	CON
DOV/14/00278	Installation of new flat roof and windows (Existing conservatory to be partially demolished) 1 Lower Road, Temple Ewell, CT16 3DX	CON
DOV/14/00283	Change of use of first floor to a members club First Floor, 4-5 Waterloo Crescent, Dover, CT16 1LA	LCN
DOV/14/00297	Erection of a single storey rear extension 32 Upper Strand Street, Sandwich, CT13 9EL	LCN
DOV/14/00129	Internal and external alterations Old Harbour Station, Elizabeth Street, Dover, CT17 9BZ	LBC
DOV/14/00193	Erection of an attached dwelling Land rear of, 17 London Road & adjacent to 1 Matthews Place, Dover, CT16 2LA	CON
DOV/14/00213	Erection of a detached stable block Land at Roman Road, Whitfield, CT15 5HB	MAR
DOV/14/00261	Erection of a first floor rear extension, a single storey rear extension, new pitched roof and installation of a flue Nutwood, Dover Road, Ringwould, Deal, CT14 8HF	CON
DOV/14/00268	Installation of ATM pod, replacement trolley bays and timber cladding Tesco Stores Ltd., Honeywood Parkway, Whitfield, CT16 3EH	MAJ
DOV/14/00272	Removal of condition 9 of planning permission DOV/10/00393 relating to Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes (Application Under Section 73) Grosvenor Mansions, Queen Street, Deal, CT14 6ET	CON
DOV/14/00282	Erection of a two storey side extension Woodstock, Little Mongeham, Deal, CT14 0HS	ARW
DOV/14/00289	Erection of a single storey rear extension (existing conservatory to be demolished) Apple Tree Cottage, Slip Lane, Alkham, Dover, CT15 7DA	CON

#### Reason for Advert Codes:-

ARW – Affects a Public Right of Way LCN – Listed Building in a Conservation Area  
CON – Within Conservation Area MAJ – Major Development

Some applications are not publicised in this list. All applications may be inspected at the Council Offices, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, to which address any representations (to include a postal address) should be sent within 21 days marked "for the attention of Planning". Applications may also be viewed, and comments on applications may be made on our website [www.dover.gov.uk/planning](http://www.dover.gov.uk/planning) or at Dover Gateway, 71 Castle Street, Dover, Deal Library or the Area Office, The Guildhall, Sandwich

Failure to meet the above deadline may jeopardise the chances of representations being considered. Any representations received may be made available for inspection by the public, and may be copied to others, including the secretary of state and the applicant if there is an appeal against the council's decision. Representations will not be acknowledged until an application has been determined.

Please note that the Council does not accept any responsibility for any incomplete or inaccurate description of any application.



## Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

**14/00808/HOUSE Little Standen Standen Street, Benenden**  
- Loft conversion and internal alterations (LB)

**14/00810/LBC Little Standen Standen Street, Benenden**  
- Listed Building Consent - Loft conversion and internal alterations (LB)

**14/00829/HOUSE Springhill Oast Standen Street, Benenden**  
- Detached 3 bay garage (LB)

**14/00812/HOUSE 2 Bluebell Cottage Broadwater Lane, Broadwater**  
- Creation of 1 no. means of escape window on first floor rear elevation (CA)

**14/00870/FULL OS Plots 0072 6400 4568 Off Sherenden Road, Capel**  
- Solar park for generation of low carbon renewable electricity to the local distribution network (MAJOR)

**14/00798/FULL 71 Mount Ephraim & Basement Flat Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden**  
- Alterations to rear to form Juliet balcony on ground floor. Re-rendering of building and alterations to rooflight (CA)

**14/00804/LBC 17 Mount Ephraim Royal Tunbridge Wells, Culverden**  
- Listed Building Consent: Replace white wooden sash windows with white upvc sash windows on rear elevation (CA) (LB)

**14/00820/FULL Dental Surgery 27 Dudley Road, Culverden**  
- Change of use from Dental Surgery back to Residential and loft conversion (CA)

**14/00738/HOUSE Beale Farm Sand Lane, Frittenden**  
- Rear conservatory extension (LB)

**14/00742/LBC Beale Farm Sand Lane, Frittenden**  
- Rear conservatory extension (LB)

**14/00799/HOUSE Fairmead Back Lane, Goudhurst**  
- Demolition of existing lobby and erection of single-storey infill kitchen extension (CA)

**14/00800/HOUSE Furnace Mill Farm Furnace Lane, Lamberhurst**  
- Two storey side extension, redesign porch and internal alterations (LB)

**14/00801/LBC Furnace Mill Farm Furnace Lane, Lamberhurst**  
- Listed Building Consent: Two storey side extension, redesign porch and internal alterations (LB)

**14/00817/FULL Owl House Gardens Tea Rooms Mount Pleasant, Lamberhurst**  
- Change of use of existing pool house and conversion into a single residential dwelling (LB) (PROV)

**14/00853/HOUSE 6 Down Cottages The Down, Lamberhurst**  
- Erection of oak framed garage to replace garage and shed (CA) (LB)

**14/00837/LBC 12C Grove Hill Gardens Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks**  
- Listed Building Consent: Renewal of roof membrane, slates, lead, flat roof area (LB)

**14/00849/FULL Summerville Group Royal Victoria House, Pantiles & St Marks**  
- Change of use of part of lower ground floor from Class B1a (Office) to Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) as health and pilates studio (CA) (LB)

**14/00776/LBC 15 Calverley Park Crescent Royal Tunbridge Wells, Park**  
- Listed Building Consent - Minor internal alterations to include reversal of approval granted under TW/96/00423 and to remove wall between kitchen/dining, adjustments to second floor to create linked en-suite, installation of spiral cellar to basement with associated works (LB)

**14/00795/LBC Old Tavern Bodiam Road, Sandhurst**  
- Listed Building Consent: Take down the top ten layers of a chimney to expose the remains of a corroded metal strap bracing the chimney to the main structure, replace the metal strap and rebuild the chimney to the original height (works commenced) (LB)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROV) Affecting A Public Right of way (CA) Affecting A Conservation Area (LB) Affecting A Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website ([www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk](http://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk)), at The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells. We accept comments online, by email to [planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk](mailto:planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk) or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date.

You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

James Freeman  
Head of Planning Services, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council  
Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 5 April 2014



## THE MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Town and Country Planning Act  
Notice of Applications

**MA/14/0345/S - TANNER OAST, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 9ND** - Listed building consent for conversion of building into two residential units including erection of two detached garages and associated works. **Reason: 3**

**MA/14/0346/S - TANNER OAST, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 9ND** - Conversion of building into two residential units, including change of use of agricultural land to residential and erection of two double garages with associated works. **Reason: 1, 7**

**MA/14/0364/N - 36, ROYAL STAR ARCADE, HIGH STREET, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME14 1JL** - Change of use from farm shop (Use Class A1 Retail) to tea house (Use Class A3 Restaurant and Cafe). **Reason: 2**

**MA/14/0420/S - LAND REAR OF PATS COTTAGE, FARLEIGH LANE, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME16 9LY** - Outline application for the erection of a detached dwelling with attached single garage and 1 no. car parking space with access and layout considered at this stage and all other matters reserved for future consideration. **Reason: 9**

**MA/14/0430/S - FRIDAY STREET FARM, FRIDAY STREET, EAST SUTTON, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME17 3DD** - Extension to existing office building. **Reason: 1**

**MA/14/0440/N - ECLIPSE PARK, SITTINGBOURNE ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT** - Approval of reserved matters of layout, appearance, scale and landscaping of planning permission MA/11/0227 (Variation of conditions 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, & 16 of MA/09/1784 (outline planning permission for erection of a hotel with access to be considered at this stage and all other matters reserved for future consideration) to allow the approved fixed Eclipse Park access and local highway improvement works to be implemented in advance of approval of the remaining reserved matters and discharge of other conditions) for the erection of an hotel (150 bedrooms) with associated parking (173 spaces) and landscaping. **Reason: 6, 9**

**MA/14/0449/S - THE DAIRY, LUGHORSE LANE, HUNTON, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME15 0QU** - Erection of two single storey extensions. **Reason: 3**

**MA/14/0452/S - LITTLE HICKMOTTS, SUMMERHILL ROAD, MARDEN, TONBRIDGE, KENT, TN12 9DB** - Listed building consent for replacement garage building. **Reason: 1**

**MA/14/0457/S - 2, BOCKINGFORD COTTAGES, BOCKINGFORD LANE, MAIDSTONE, KENT, ME15 6DR** - Erection of two storey rear extension (replacement of existing single storey extension). **Reason: 2**

**MA/14/0460/N - LAND REAR OF BARKER COTTAGES, NEW CUT, DEAN STREET, EAST FARLEIGH, KENT, ME15 0HR** - Demolition of existing storage buildings and erection of 2no dwellings with amenity space and new access. **Reason: 1, 2**

## Reasons for advertisement key:

- 1 - Applications affects the setting of a Listed Building.
- 2 - Application affects the setting of a Conservation Area.
- 3 - Application is for Listed Building Consent.
- 6 - Application is Major Development.
- 7 - Application affects a Public Right of Way.
- 9 - Application does not accord with the Local Plan.

Copies of applications listed can be viewed on our website [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk) or at Maidstone Gateway, Maidstone (Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5.30pm, and Saturday 9am to 1pm). Any representations should be made in writing to me by no later than **20th April 2014**, quoting the application number.

**Rob Jarman**, Head of Development Management, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ. **Dated:** 6th April 2014

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING  
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE)  
(ENGLAND) ORDER 2010

The following applications have been submitted for consideration by the Council:

**Y14/0183/SH#** - Haguelands Farm Burmarsh Road Burmarsh Kent - Retention of use of the land for a seasonal tourism maize maze facility (July - September) and visitor over flow car park, together with the retention of timber structures on the land.

**Y14/0416/SH#** - Town Hall High Street New Romney Kent TN28 8BT - Crown reduction to a Bay tree, an Ash tree and a Holly, together with the felling of three Sycamore trees situated within a conservation area.

**Y14/0407/SH** - The Farmhouse Acrise Mews Oak Hill Acrise Folkestone - Listed Building Consent for the demolition of existing single storey side addition; erection of new single storey side extension; demolition and rebuild of 4 chimneys; replacement of 6 windows; underpinning; tanking of cellar and replacement of floors to ground floor

**Y14/0238/SH** - 39 Bouverie Road West Folkestone Kent CT20 2SZ - Installation of replacement uPVC windows.

**Y14/0432/SH** - Flat 1 17 Earls Avenue Folkestone Kent CT20 2HG - Felling of a Horse Chestnut tree and reduction down to the knuckle of two Horse Chestnut trees situated within a conservation area.

**Y14/0163/SH \*** - Hotel Imperial Princes Parade Hythe Kent CT21 6AE - Erection of a garden servicing and maintenance facility together with centralised refuse bin collection and handling point.

Any representations should be made in writing to the Head of Planning, Shepway District Council, Civic Centre, Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 2QY or emailed to [planning@shepway.gov.uk](mailto:planning@shepway.gov.uk). Comments should be made in writing within 21 days from the date of publication. It should be noted that any representations received will be made available for public inspection.

Some applications can be viewed at other locations in addition to the Civic Centre, Folkestone. The applications are marked as follows:

# - The One Stop Shop, Magpies, Church Approach, New Romney

† - Hythe Town Council Offices, Stade Street, Hythe

Applications can be viewed and comments made online at <http://searchplanapps.shepway.gov.uk/online-applications/>.

The applications marked (\*) do not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area in which the land to which the application relates is situated.

C Lewis, Head of Planning  
Shepway District Council

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990  
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND  
CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Swale Borough Council as Local Planning Authority has received the following applications which are being advertised to ascertain the views of persons living near the sites and other interested parties. The proposed developments relate to one or more of the following:

1. The site of the application is within/affecting a designated Conservation Area (Section 73) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
2. The proposed development may affect the Listed Building or it's setting.
3. The application is for a Major Development.

REPRESENTATIONS IN RESPECT OF THE FOLLOWING  
APPLICATIONS MUST BE MADE BY 21 APRIL 2014.

## SW/14/0061:

Advertisement Consent for one externally illuminated fascia sign with built up letters - Queen Philippa Hotel, High Street, QUEENBOROUGH; **REASON 1**

## SW/14/0260:

Listed Building Consent for retrospective application for insertion of double glazing - 123 The Street, BOUGHTON; **REASONS 1 & 2**

## SW/14/0291:

Installation of PV solar panels, replacement of existing summerhouse and erection of veranda - Norel, The Street, BORDEN; **REASON 1**

## SW/14/0293 &amp; SW/14/0294:

Proposed demolition of existing and erection of new side extension with associated internal alterations - Brent Hill Cottages, Brent Hill, FAVERSHAM; **REASONS 1 & 2**

## SW/14/0318:

First floor extension over existing ground floor footprint and additional first floor balcony - 18 Waterside Close, Upper Brents, FAVERSHAM; **REASON 1**

## SW/14/0329:

Change of use of vulnerable victims suite back to residential dwelling and the erection of a single dwelling along with amended access on land at 82 London Road, Faversham, Kent - 82 London Road, FAVERSHAM; **REASON 1**

## SW/14/0334:

Demolition of garages and erection of 5 No. houses and 9 No. flats with associated parking and landscaping - Land adjacent to 105 Marine Parade, SHEERNESS; **REASON 3**

Particulars of the proposal(s) can be obtained from Planning Services, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, where copies of the applications and all documents submitted with them may be inspected during office hours; any representations should be made in writing to this address.

**James Freeman**  
Head of Planning

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## PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY & VILLAGE GREENS

### PROW – IN THE BOROUGH OF ASHFORD

#### NOTICE OF THE MAKING OF AN ORDER TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE PUBLIC FOOTPATH AU81 IN ASHFORD

#### PUBLIC FOOTPATH AU81 (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014 ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1), AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council has made an Order the effect of which is to temporarily close Public Footpath AU81, between its junction with North Street and its junction with Hardinge Road from the 31st March 2014.

The path will be closed for a maximum of six months, although it is expected that it will reopen sooner. The path is closed because works are planned near it and there is a likelihood of danger to users.

The alternative route is via North Street and Hardinge Road and will be signed for the duration of the closure.

For detailed enquiries please contact Faye Faiers Contact Centre no. 03000 417171

Or for further details on temporary closures on the Rights of Way network see:

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/countryside\\_access/traffic\\_regulation\\_orders.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/countryside_access/traffic_regulation_orders.aspx)

### PROW – IN THE BOROUGH OF ASHFORD

#### NOTICE OF CONFIRMATION OF MODIFICATION ORDER WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

#### DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT FOR THE COUNTY OF KENT MAP SHEET 140 (TQ94SW)

#### THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (PUBLIC FOOTPATH AW149 (PART) PLUCKLEY)

#### DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER 2012

On 1st November 2012 the Kent County Council confirmed the above Order without modifications.

The effect of the Order as confirmed is to modify the Definitive Map and Statement for the area by deleting that length of Public Footpath AW149 which commences at NGR TQ 9219 4491 (Point A) and runs in a northerly direction for 95 metres passing to the west of the garden boundary to the property known as Arden to NGR TQ 9218 4500 (Point B) and adding a new length of Public Footpath AW149 which commences at NGR TQ 9219 4491 (Point A) and continues upon land owned by Arden in a northerly direction for approximately 94 metres to NGR TQ 9219 4500 (Point C). The path then joins with AW149 on map sheet 103 (TQ94NW).

All distances are approximate, all directions are general.

A copy of the Order as confirmed and the Order Map have been placed and may be seen free of charge at the Offices of Ashford Borough Council, Ashford Gateway Plus, Church Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1AS or at the Kent County Council, PROW & Access Service, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX. Copies of the Order and Map may be purchased there at the price of £5.

This Order became operative as from 1st November 2012 but if a person aggrieved by the Order desires to question the validity thereof or of any provision contained therein on the grounds that it is not within the powers of Section 53(3)(c)(i) & 53(3)(c)(iii) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, or that any of the requirements of Schedule 15 to the Act have not been complied with in relation to the confirmation of the Order, he may, under Paragraph 12 of Schedule 15 to the Act, within 42 days from 6th April 2014 make application for the purpose to the High Court.

### PROW – IN THE BOROUGH OF MAIDSTONE

#### NOTICE OF PUBLIC PATH ORDERS

#### IN THE BOROUGH OF MAIDSTONE

#### HIGHWAYS ACT 1980

#### THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

#### I) (PUBLIC FOOTPATH KH544 (PART) EAST SUTTON) PUBLIC PATH EXTINGUISHMENT AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2014

#### II) (PUBLIC FOOTPATH KH541(PART) EAST SUTTON) PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2014

The above Orders, made under sections 118 and 119 of the Highways Act 1980 will:-

i) extinguish the entire width of that length of public footpath numbered KH544 which commences from NGR TQ 8270 4728 (Point C) and runs in a generally south easterly direction for approximately 32 metres to point NGR TQ 8272 4726 (Point D).

ii) divert the entire width of that length of public footpath numbered KH541 which commences from NGR TQ 8270 4730 (Point A) and runs in a south south westerly direction for a distance of 61 metres to point NGR TQ 8269 4724 (Point B) and will add a new length of public footpath numbered KH541 with a width of 2 metres, which commences from NGR TQ 8270 4730 (Point A), as indicated on the Order plan and runs in an east south east direction for approximately 36 metres to NGR TQ 8273 4729 (Point E) and thence in a south south westerly direction for 23 metres to NGR TQ 8272 4726 (Point D) and thence in a west south westerly direction for 41 metres to NGR TQ 8269 4724 (Point B).

All directions general, all distances approximate.

Copies of the Orders and the Maps have been placed and may be seen free of charge at the Offices of Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, Kings Street, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6JQ or at the Kent County Council, PROW & Access Service, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XX, during office hours. Copies of the Order and Map may be purchased there at the price of £5.

Any representation about or objection to the Orders may be sent in writing to Mrs Olivia Bonham at the Kent County Council (address as below). Tel: 01622 221169 email: [olivia.bonham@kent.gov.uk](mailto:olivia.bonham@kent.gov.uk) not later than 5th May 2014. Please state the grounds on which they are made.

Please note that objections/representations cannot be treated as confidential and may come into the public domain. Copies of any objections or representations received may be disclosed to interested parties, including the Planning Inspectorate where the case is referred to it for determination.

If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Kent County Council may confirm the Orders as unopposed Orders. If the Orders are sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment for confirmation any representations and objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the Orders.

### PROW – IN THE BOROUGH OF TONBRIDGE AND MALLING

#### NOTICE OF THE MAKING OF AN ORDER TO TEMPORARILY CLOSE PUBLIC FOOTPATH MU30 IN TONBRIDGE

#### PUBLIC FOOTPATH MU30 (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

#### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 SECTION 14(1), AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Kent County Council has made an Order the effect of which is to temporarily close Public Footpath MU30 (River Walk), between its junction with New Warf Road and its junction with High Street from the 31st March 2014.

The path will be closed for a maximum of six months.

The path is closed because flood wall repair works are planned near it and there is a likelihood of danger to users.

The alternative route is via New Warf Road and Tonbridge High Street and will be signed for the duration of the closure.

For detailed enquiries please contact Michele Snodgrass

Contact Centre no. 03000 417171

Or for further details on temporary closures on the Rights of Way network see:

[http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment\\_and\\_planning/countryside\\_access/traffic\\_regulation\\_orders.aspx](http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/countryside_access/traffic_regulation_orders.aspx)

Public Rights of Way and Access Service  
Kent County Council  
Invicta House  
County Hall  
Maidstone  
Kent  
ME14 1XX

Dated: 6th April 2014

*This document is available in alternative formats and can be explained in a range of languages.*

For further information, please contact  
Kent Public Rights of Way and Access Service,  
on 03000 417171 (local rate) Mon-Fri 9am-5pm  
or visit [www.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccess](http://www.kent.gov.uk/countrysideaccess)

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## Kent County Council, acting in exercise of its powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, makes or intends to make, the following Orders.

### HIGHWAYS – ASHFORD AREA

#### CHENNEL PARK ROAD, TENTERDEN (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of excavation works to provide a new water supply, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Chennell Park Road, Tenterden.

Chennell Park Road will be closed in the vicinity of Coombe Farm, with access from either direction up to where the road is closed, but no through access.

A closure is planned to commence from 7 April 2014 at 09:30 hours through until 11 April at 17:00 hours.

The alternative route for through traffic is via Cranbrook Road and Mill Pond Lane.

Due to the nature of the works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

#### VARIOUS ROADS, ASHFORD (CARRIAGEWAY PATCHING) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER APRIL 2014

Because of carriageway patching works, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on various roads in the Ashford area, on or after 7 April 2014.

The roads affected, planned dates of closures and alternative routes are as shown below.

Closures are planned for 08:30 hours to 17:30 hours each day except where otherwise stated, but there may be certain occasions when the nature of works delays or prevents a road being re-opened outside the working hours.

**SOLE STREET, CRUNDALE** – closed between Olantigh Road and Richdore Road

**10 April 2014 for 3 days**

Alternative route via Olantigh Road, Coldharbour Lane, Wye Road, Waltham Road, Ashenfield Road and Richdore Road

**HIGH HALDEN ROAD, BIDDENDEN / POT KILN LANE, BETHERSDEN** – closed between A262 Tenterden Road and Bull Lane

**14 April 2014 for 4 days**

Alternative route via A262 Tenterden Road, Biddenden Road, A28 Ashford Road and Bull Lane

**SPOT HOUSE LANE, WOODCHURCH / SCHOOL HILL, WAREHORNE** – closed between Coldblow and Warehorne Road

**22 April 2014 for 3 days**

Alternative route via Woodchurch Road & Malthouse Lane

**CRANBROOK ROAD, TENTERDEN** – closed between Rolvenden Road & Mill Pond Lane

**24 April to 3 May 2014, weekdays only**

Alternative route via Tenterden Road, Benenden Road, A262 Tenterden Road, A262 Biddenden Road, A28 Ashford Road, A28 High Street and Rolvenden Road

**BLACKWALL ROAD, WITTERSHAM** – closed between Ham Green and Blackwall Bridge

**6 May 2014 for 3 days**

Alternative route via The Street, B2082 Stocks Road, Rye Road, Wittersham Road, Wittersham Lane, Iden Road, A268 Rye Road, Main Street, Mackerel Hill and Wittersham Road

### HIGHWAYS – CANTERBURY AREA

#### VARIOUS ROADS, CANTERBURY (CARRIAGEWAY PATCHING) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER APRIL 2014

To allow carriageway patching works to be safely carried out, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on various roads in the Canterbury area, on or after 7 April 2014.

The roads affected, dates of closure and alternative routes are as shown below.

Closures are planned to be between 07:30 hours to 18:00 hours each day, but there may be certain occasions when the nature of works delays or prevents a road being re-opened outside the working hours

**GROVE FERRY HILL / GROVE FERRY ROAD** – closed in phases for its entire length – i.e. from Island Road to Grove Road

**9 April 2014 for up to 6 days**

Alternative route via Grove Ferry Hill, A28 Island Road, A253 Ramsgate Road, The Street, Preston Road, Stourmouth Road, Grove Road and Grove Ferry Road.

**PETT BOTTOM ROAD, UPPER HARDRES** – closed between the junctions with School Lane and Lynsore Bottom

**14 April 2014 for up to 2 days**

Alternative route via Tapleys Hill, Hardres Court Road, The Street and Manns Hill

**HILLSIDE AVENUE, CANTERBURY** – closed for its entire length

**5 May 2014 for up to 4 days**

There is no alternative route; every effort will be made to

maintain access whenever safe to do so, but there may be delays and certain times this is not possible

### HIGHWAYS – DOVER AREA

#### BROOKFIELD AVENUE, DOVER (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of carriageway patching works, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Brookfield Avenue, Dover.

A closure is planned to commence from 11 April 2014 for up to 2 days or until the works have been completed.

Brookfield Avenue will be closed between the junctions with Green Lane and Park Road.

The alternative route is via Brookfield Avenue, Old Park Road, Crabble Hill and Buckland Avenue.

Due to the nature of the works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours on the first day.

#### LOWER ROAD, TEMPLE EWELL (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of carriageway repairs, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Lower Road, Temple Ewell.

Lower Road will be closed between the junctions with Alkham Road and Mill Street with no through access between Alkham and Temple Ewell via Lower Road.

A closure is planned to commence from 7 April 2014 at 07:30 hours for up to 4 days, or until the works have been completed.

The alternative route is via Alkham Road and London Road. Please note there is an 11' 6" height restriction on diversion route.

Due to the nature of the works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

Every effort will be made to try and maintain access for residents, but there are likely to be delays and times when access is not possible.

### HIGHWAYS – MAIDSTONE AREA

#### HEATH ROAD & ULCOMBE ROAD, LANGLEY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of gas mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Heath Road & Ulcombe Road, Langley, on or after 7 April 2014 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

Heath Road will be closed from Leeds Road to outside number 5 and Ulcombe Road from Leeds Road to Glicine House.

The alternative route for Heath Road is via Leeds Road and Horseshoes Lane and for Ulcombe Road via Leeds Road, A274 Maidstone Road, Chartway Street and Gravelly Bottom Road.

#### STEDE HILL & HOGBARN LANE, HARRIETSHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because it is necessary to access an underground structure for cabling works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Stede Hill on or after 7 April 2014 and Highbarn Lane, Harrietsham, on or after 14 April 2014 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

Stede Hill will be closed from Marley Road to Highbarn Lane. The alternative route is via Marley Road, Pilgrims Way, Flint Lane, West Street, Ashdown Road, Syndale Bottom Road and Highbarn Lane.

Highbarn Lane will be closed from Stede Hill to outside "Stoncroft". The alternative route is via Ringlestone Road and Stede Hill.

### HIGHWAYS – SEVENOAKS AREA

#### AZALEA DRIVE, SWANLEY (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of a Crane Operation, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Azalea Drive, on or after 27th April 2014 for up to 1 day or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between Azalea Drive and Station Approach.

The alternative route is via Station Approach, Godsel Road and Azalea Drive.

#### CRAMPTONS ROAD, SEVENOAKS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of the installation of a new water main and connection, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Cramptons Road, Sevenoaks, on or after 28th April 2014 for up to 3 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed at the junction Otford Road and there will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via: Otford Road.

#### D2267 FORK TO CROYDON ROAD, WESTERHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of replacement of gas main insertion including service connections and mains abandonment works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on D2267 Fork to Croydon Road, Westerham, on or after 7th April 2014 for up to 4 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed at 20 Croydon Road (slip road) to 16 Marlborough Court and there will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via: Croydon Road

#### VALLEY ROAD, FAWKHAM, SEVENOAKS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of carriageway patching works, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Valley Road, Fawkham, Sevenoaks, on or after 7th April 2014 for up to 2 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed from the Pumping Station at Longfield to Fawkham Green and there will be no access for through traffic at this location.

The alternative route is via: from the North Fawkham Road Longfield, Main Road Longfield, Hartley Road Longfield, Ash Road Hartley, Chapel Wood Road Ash, Ash Road Ash, The Street Ash, South Ash Road Stansted, Ash Lane West Kingsdown, London Road West Kingsdown, Fawkham Road West Kingsdown, and Brands Hatch Road West Kingsdown and visa versa.

#### A20 LONDON ROAD, FARNINGHAM (SPEED LIMITS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

For the safety of the public and workforce during phone cabling works, Kent County Council has made an Order to impose temporary maximum speed limits of 40 mph and 10 mph on sections of the A20 London Road, Farningham.

It is planned that the restrictions will be in force from 8 April 2014 for up to 2 nights, between 20:00 hours and 06:00 hours each night.

A temporary mandatory speed limit of 10 mph applies in both directions as and when the 10 mph signage is displayed on site, and is in conjunction with temporary traffic lights and a "Convoy System" to escort traffic through the roadworks.

A temporary mandatory speed limit of 40 mph will apply on the A20 London Road, Farningham, between Broomhill Roundabout and the junction with the A25 Dartford Road, as and when 40 mph signs are displayed on site.

#### MILL LANE, SHOREHAM SEVENOAKS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of a Sewer Connection, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Mill Lane, Shoreham, on or after 7th April 2014 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

There will no alternative route as Mill Lane is a Dead end road therefore no diversion required.

#### PILGRIMS WAY EAST, OTFORD, SEVENOAKS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because BT Openreach require safe access for fibre cabling, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Pilgrims Way East, Otford on or after 21st April 2014 between the hours of 21.00 and 06.00 for up to 6 nights or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed from the junction with Rowdown Lane to the junction A225 Shoreham Road.

There will be no access for through traffic between these junctions.

The alternative route is via Row Dow, Rowdown Lane, Fackenen Lane and A225 Shoreham Road.

### HIGHWAYS – SWALE AREA

#### CHURCH STREET, RODMERSHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of works to repair a collapsed manhole, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Church Street, Rodmersham.

Church Street will be closed in the vicinity of Church House, with access from either direction up to where the road is closed, but no through access.

A closure is planned to commence from 7 April 2014 for up to 4 days or until the works have been completed.

The alternative route for through traffic is via School Lane, A2 Fox Hill, Canterbury Road, Swanstreet Avenue, Highsted Road, Stockers Hill, Green Lane and Church Street.

Due to the nature of these works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

### HIGHWAYS – THANET AREA

#### MELBOURNE ROAD, RAMSGATE (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of works to re-line a sewer, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on part of Melbourne Road, Ramsgate.

A closure is planned to commence from 7 April 2014 for up to 3 weeks or until the works have been completed.

Melbourne Road will be closed between and including the junctions with Calverden Road and Ringold Avenue, with access to these roads remaining from their other junctions.

The alternative through route is via St John's Avenue and Princess Margaret Avenue.

Due to the nature of the works, it will not be possible to re-open the road outside the working hours.

#### VARIOUS ROADS, THANET (CARRIAGEWAY PATCHING) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER APRIL 2014

To allow carriageway patching works to be safely carried out, Kent County Council has made an Order to temporarily prohibit through traffic on various roads in the Thanet area, on or after 7 April 2014.

The roads affected, planned dates and times of closures and alternative routes are as shown below.

**COTTINGTON ROAD, MINSTER** – closed between the junction with Grinsell Hill and the A299 Slip Road

**7 April for 3 days** off peak, 09:30 hours to 15:00 hours each day due to effect on buses

Alternative route via Cotington Link, A299 Hengist Way, Tothill Street, Foxborough Lane, The Lanes and Grinsell Hill

**A255 RAMSGATE ROAD, BROADSTAIRS** – closed between junction with Gladstone Road and Ramsgate Road Roundabout

**28 April for 3 evenings** – 19:00 hours to 22:00 hours

Alternative route via Bromstone Road, Fairfield Road, A255 Broadstairs Road, The Broadway, High Street, Queen's Road and Ramsgate Road

**PYSON'S ROAD, RAMSGATE** – closed between the junctions with Hopes Lane and A254 Margate Road

**27 April for 1 day** – 09:30 hours to 16:00 hours

Alternative route via Pyson's Road, Rumfields Road, Westwood Road, Northwood Road and Margate Road

**ALBION ROAD, BIRCHINGTON** – closed beyond the entrance to Albion Road Car Park and Alpha Road

**30 April for 2 days** – 07:30 hours to 18:00 hours each day

Alternative route via Station Road and Alpha Road

Access will be maintained for Woodford Court and for vehicles exiting Crescent Road as signposted on site

**RADLEY CLOSE, BROADSTAIRS** – closed for its entire length including junction with Tina Gardens

**1 May for 4 days** – 07:30 hours to 18:00 hours each day

There is no alternative route as the road is a *cul-de-sac*. Every effort will be made to maintain access when safe to do so, but there will be some delays and times when access is not possible.

### HIGHWAYS – TUNBRIDGE WELLS AREA

#### CULVERDEN DOWN, TUNBRIDGE WELLS (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2014

Because of delivery and erection of buildings using a crane, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Culverden Down, Tunbridge Wells, on or after 8 April 2014 for up to 6 working days between 09:30hrs and 15:00hrs or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed outside 10-12.

The alternative route is via Culverden Park and A26 St Johns Road.

John Burr  
Director of Highways & Transportation  
Kent County Council  
Invicta House  
County Hall,  
Maidstone  
Kent ME14 1XQ

Dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014

For further information, please contact  
Kent County Council Highways and Transportation,  
on 03000 418181 (local rate)  
or visit [www.kent.gov.uk/highways](http://www.kent.gov.uk/highways)



# Walker excited to be back to help players 'stand up and be counted'

The lure of his home county and a call from club captain Rob Key were enough to make former player Matt Walker return to Kent as assistant coach, as he tells **Greg Miles**

**T**HE chance to come back to his spiritual home was a no-brainer as far as Matt Walker was concerned.

Walker was unveiled as the county's new assistant coach last month, returning to a club where he had spent 16 years as a player.

That ended in 2008 when he left for Essex, where his coaching career started once he had retired.

Coming back south of the Thames was in some ways a surprise move for Walker, 40, who admitted he would not have left his old job for any other county.

"I wasn't really looking for a change," he said. "I was very lucky to be at Essex as a player and in a coaching role. I loved my role up there."

"I got a call from Rob Key, who explained he was taking up the captaincy again and asked if I was interested in coming back."

"He was quite keen to get me on board, which was nice to hear. I said I would think about it and it was a no-brainer. I had never been in that situation before. I left Kent but was released as a player. I have never been in a position where I was in a job... and was head-hunted, if you like."

"I wanted to make sure I did it the right way and did not upset anyone."

"Coming back home to where I live and played and came through the system is great."

"I had a 16-year playing career here and was very proud to be here as a player. It just feels right and I'm glad it's happened."

"If it was any other county I probably wouldn't have been interested. It's a similar role to what I had at Essex."

Having been on the playing staff in the not too distant past there are a number of the current squad with whom he shared the crease, including Key, James Tredwell and Geraint Jones.

"Those relationships have always been in place, which is really important," he said.

"You don't want to come to somewhere new and take time to build those relationships and trusts."

"Those bonds will make it a lot eas-

## First-class stats

Runs . . . . .	12,197
Average . . . . .	36.08
Centuries . . . . .	28
Half-centuries . . . . .	51

ier for me as a coach. Although I have come back as an Essex player over the years, it feels like a long time.

"Rob knows me very well and my thoughts on cricket, and how I work. Hopefully, we will always be on the same hymn sheet."

Becoming a coach in the professional arena was not really on the agenda for Walker.

"As a player I didn't necessarily see myself going into coaching," he said. "I thought I would finish playing and go onto something different."

"In the winters I have been going to teach at schools and would probably have ended up in a head-of-cricket role or something like that if it hadn't happened."

"It came about through my time at Essex. When I joined, I came from the outside not only as a senior player but helping a lot of the younger batters."

"They came to me and started asking advice and they were very forthcoming in seeking out knowledge."

"I found myself working on my game and trying to help others."

"It was a good role that developed."

**“Coming back home to where I live and played and came through the system is great. It just feels right and I’m glad it’s happened”**

**Matt Walker,**

On his coaching role at KCCC

It was something that helped me as a player as well."

The move from player to coach became permanent when Graham Gooch left Essex to work with the England team.

"When the role became open he thought it would be a good role for me to take," said Walker.

"I haven't missed the playing side of things. I have surprised myself how much I have enjoyed coaching."

**W**hile the coaching role has not changed his personality, he will have to take a different approach when dealing with those he sat alongside in the dressing room earlier in his career.

"When I got the job at Essex I didn't become a dictator," he said. "But you can't be their best mate all the time."

"The bottom line is it's about being honest and you hope players will respect that."

While he is in a positive frame of mind for the season ahead and feels there is plenty of room for optimism with the squad at the county's disposal, he is not one for making bold statements of intent.

"It's very easy for a coach at the start of the season to say you're going to do this and that," he said. "Every coach will be saying the same things this time of the year."

"But that is the ambition talking. You have to be in a positive frame of mind going into the season."

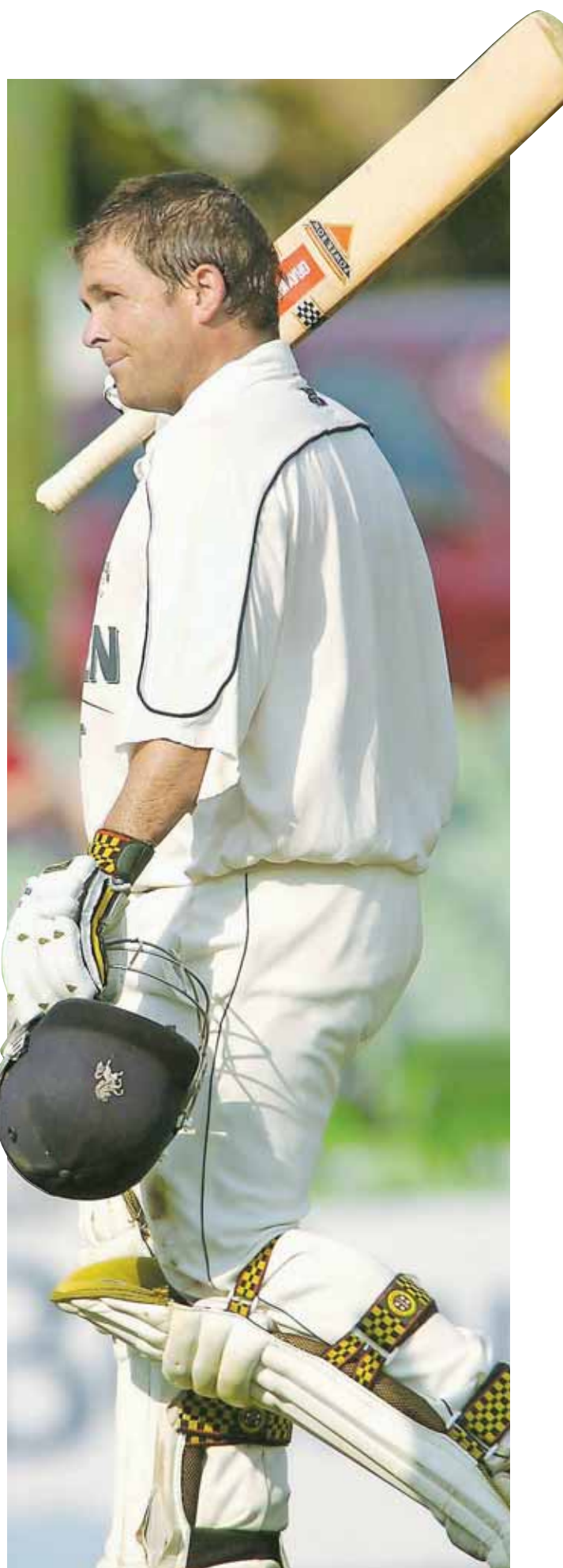
"What I do know is we have got a really good mix of players and a squad that's strong in depth now."

He feels it is time for some of the county's youngsters, who have shown glimpses of promise in recent seasons, to cement their place in the side.

"There is a lot of talent there," he said. "It's no good being good one day and bad the next. We need a set that can have that consistency through a long period of the season."

"There is a lovely blend of senior players and younger players that have to stand up and be counted."

"That's what's exciting for me."



**TIMES PAST:** Cricketer Matt Walker spent 16 years as a player at Kent



Pictures: ADY KERRY



**CREASE TIME:** Matt Walker holds the record score, 275, for a Kent batsman at the St Lawrence Ground

MATTHEW Jonathan Walker was a talented all-round sportsman as a youngster, competing in hockey, football, rugby and cricket before taking up the last more seriously.

The Kings School, Rochester, pupil made his first appearance for Kent in a second-team match against Lancashire in 1990.

After two years with the seconds he got a call-up to England's under-19s for a tour of Pakistan following some impressive performances.

He got his initial taste of the first team in 1993 when he joined a pre-season tour of Zimbabwe, but he was not to feature again until the following season.

A high point came in August 1996 when he made what is still a record, 275, for a Kent batsman at The Spitfire Ground, St Lawrence, in Canterbury during a game against Somerset.

It came from 439 balls and included 41 fours from more than nine hours and 33 minutes at the crease.

"It's a long time ago to me. It's a vague memory, to be honest," he said. "I'm proud of it. It was a good couple of days for me and it's nice to have that record."

"It will be broken at some stage. Keysey got very close a couple of years ago."

He pointed to the T20 final win over Gloucestershire in 2007 as

## The life and Kent times of Matt Walker



one of his career highlights.

Walker top-scored that day at Edgbaston with 45 as Kent edged to a dramatic four-wicket win with three balls to spare.

Gloucestershire finished on 146-8 before Kent just got over the line, with Darren Stevens hitting four from a no-ball to clinch victory on 147-6.

"Personal success is nice," said Walker. "The times you get centuries are always nice."

"The things that are most memorable are the games you win, the great run-chases and titles you win. There weren't a huge amount in my time. The T20 at Edgbaston was the highlight of my career, though, I would say."

"I was reminiscing about it the other day, watching the footage again."

"We were the underdogs on the day and played some brilliant cricket to win it."

"It's a fairly short career, so if you can walk away with some memories of winning titles that's what sticks."

"You cannot do it for players you coach. You can only give them advice and work with them."

Arguably Walker's finest year for Kent came in 2006 when he hit 1,419 runs in the County Championship.

He left in September, 2008, after finding his first-team opportunities limited that season, joining rivals Essex, where he eventually became batting coach.

# Maidstone win 3G pitch appeal to FA

MAIDSTONE United have been successful in their appeal against a Ryman League ruling denying them the opportunity to compete in the Premier Division play-offs because of their artificial 3G pitch.

Wednesday's Football Association appeal panel unanimously agreed that should the Stones finish from second to fifth they would be able to challenge for promotion to Skryll (Conference) South.

The Ryman League had told Maidstone in February that they would not be eligible for the play-offs because of the Football Conference rule against artificial pitches, but today's FA decision changes that.

United co-owner Oliver Ash said: "The Football Association has continued its stance of embracing artificial football turf with its decision."

"Whatever happens with our promotion push in the next few weeks, this decision is another important one for English football as a whole."

Even if United do reach the play-offs

and then win them, however, their participation in next season's Skryll South would not necessarily be guaranteed as Football Conference regulations rule against artificial pitches.

A further appeal might still be necessary.

Helen Grant, Sports Minister and Maidstone and The Weald MP, welcomed the FA decision.

She said: "It is fantastic news that the FA have decided that Maidstone United will be able to compete in the play-offs on their 3G pitch should the Stones qualify."

"The FA have shown leadership on this issue after their decision to allow 3G pitches in every round of the FA Cup from next season and it is now up to the Football Conference to follow suit."

"I will continue to press the case for a change of the rules and believe the move would not only be a huge boost for the local community in Maidstone but for grassroots football up and down the country".



**IMPROVING OUTLOOK:** Maidstone United's modern Gallagher Stadium

## Gillingham Ladies gear up for plum FA Cup tie against holders Arsenal

GILLINGHAM Ladies Football Club begin the biggest week in their history this weekend (Sunday) against Charlton Athletic Women at Chatham Town's ground.

Next up is the Kent Cup final against the same opponents on Thursday at Maidstone United's Gallagher Stadium (kick-off 7.45pm).

However, it is the FA Women's Cup

fifth-round tie against Arsenal Ladies on Sunday, April 13 (kick-off 2pm at Boreham Wood FC), that really catches the eye.

Charlotte Richardson, of Gillingham Ladies, said: "As holders and one of the best women's teams in the world, the chance to travel to Arsenal is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

## Hawkins takes Players Championship

BARRY Hawkins beat Gerard Greene in the all-Kent final of the Players Championship at the Guild Hall in Preston on Saturday last week.

The pair are friends and practice

partners, but world No 5 Hawkins, from Ditton, showed Rainham-based Greene no mercy as he routed him 4-0. Hawkins picked up £100,000 for his win and Greene £38,000.

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